

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY)

WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER 2011

MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER

What does he make of the response by local residents to August's disturbances?

RESPONSE

Amongst other things, we will be discussing tonight the cause of the disturbances and looting that occurred in early August. Nothing that we say in council assembly or elsewhere should trivialise the seriousness of the disturbances themselves or detract from the damage, fear and injury that were caused by a criminal minority, particularly on 8 August.

We must understand what happened that night and in the days that led up to it in order that we can work with the community to make sure it does not happen again. Nor should our determination to pursue and punish those responsible be blunted. We are both working with the police and using all of the powers at our own disposal to ensure that they face the full force of the law.

I was immensely proud of the response by local residents to the August disturbances. Throughout the days that followed I heard of individual acts of bravery that occurred and saw residents voluntarily and spontaneously going out on to the street and taking the steps to mend the damage that had been done.

The enduring positive image of the response to the disturbances, not just in Southwark, but for London and even nationally, will be of the wall of Pound Land in Peckham. And hundreds of people have already taken part in our community conversations - giving their opinion on what we need to change to ensure that we do not see a repeat of the disturbances.

I believe it is this and the other examples of people coming together to mend their neighbourhood that truly represent the state of our borough and our community. And it is this that we need to build on.

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

How many cases of anti-social behaviour have been considered for eviction since 7 May 2010 by Southwark Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (SASBU) and the housing offices and, of these, how many evictions have taken place?

RESPONSE

When this administration came to office we committed to acting with zero tolerance on crime and anti-social behaviour. That means using absolutely every tool that we have at our disposal to ensure that our tenants and residents have the opportunity of a safe and peaceful home life. That will, in appropriate circumstances, mean enforcing the terms of a tenant's lease and seeking an eviction from the courts where they have committed a serious crime in their community.

We will continue to pursue this course of action in all appropriate cases because we believe it is the right course of action.

Since 7 May 2010 there have been 70 cases of anti social behaviour where we have issued a notice seeking possession against a tenant or tenants.

4 possession orders have been obtained and 2 evictions have taken place since May 2010 in relation to anti social behaviour.

This compares to previous eviction data for anti social behaviour:

- 4 evictions in 2008/09
- 2 evictions in 2007/08
- 3 evictions in 2006/07
- 4 evictions in 2005/06
- 3 evictions in 2004/05.

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR SUNIL CHOPRA

What financial support has been made available to the council from a) central government and b) the Mayor of London following the disturbances in August?

RESPONSE

Funding sources from central government include:

High Street Support Scheme

This £20 million scheme is funded jointly by the Departments for Communities and Local Government, and Business Innovation and Skills, (which will be made available immediately), for the streets and areas where businesses were affected by the rioting. The money is intended to finance those measures that will get business trading again and meet short term costs. Councils will distribute the money and could use it to reduce business rates, finance building repairs and encourage customers back to the affected areas.

In addition, seriously damaged homes and business properties will be taken off the respective valuation lists. This removes any liability for council tax or business rates.

Councils have the power to offer rate relief for local firms, but must pay a quarter of the cost; central government automatically pays for three quarters of the cost. The High Street Support Scheme will help reimburse councils for this cost, to facilitate immediate and real financial help to be given to small and medium firms to rebuild their local businesses. Business rates are typically the third biggest outgoing for firms after rent and staff.

Recovery fund

This £10 million fund is intended to help councils with the immediate costs of making their areas safe, clear and clean again. This fund can be used, for example, to clear debris left strewn in streets and make immediate repairs to pavements and roads. This fund can also be used to support councils who use their powers to offer council tax discounts or council tax relief to those whose homes have been damaged but are still habitable.

Re-housing funding

This has been established to meet the immediate costs of emergency accommodation for families who have been made homeless by the disturbances. The Secretary of State has

confirmed that his department would meet these costs under established homelessness funding processes.

Bellwin Scheme

The Bellwin scheme is a long established fund that can be activated when there is an emergency or disaster involving destruction or danger to life or property which incurs expenditure for local authorities. A local authority must have already spent money up to a threshold of 0.2% of its calculated annual budget in response to the emergency or disaster before it qualifies for funding under the scheme. The threshold for Southwark is £989,918.

Funding sources from the Mayor include:

GLA fund in response to disorder

London-wide comprising £50million capital over three years for large projects (5-10 locations). The council was invited by GLA to submit outline bids, and two bids were submitted. The first for Peckham, is to complement planned investment in Peckham Rye station, and the second for Walworth, including a canopy for East St market. News on the outcome of the bid is awaited.

The Mayor's Outer London Fund - Round 2

The council is submitting three small scale bids for capital works to Peckham and Camberwell town centres (updated versions of unsuccessful round 1 bids), as well as an additional bid for Nunhead. These bids are work in progress due for submission in mid October.

The European Social Fund (ESF):

One of four main structural funds set up to help reduce differences in living standards between the regions of the European Union, by:

- reducing unemployment; and
- improving and developing the skills of employed people investing in industrial or rural areas which are in decline investing in areas with low economic development.

All ESF monies received must be matched pound for pound against similar or the same activities. The Greater London Authority (GLA) as one of five co-financing organisations has access to £24 million for the 2011-2013 ESF programme period (to be delivered through to 2015). The GLA is seeking to maximise the remaining adult (19+) ESF available in London by working with the boroughs affected by the recent social disorder. To do this the GLA is seeking direct match funding from London boroughs affected by the recent disturbances to create a skills and employment programme of up to £40 million.

Other funding sources:

The High Street Fund

Businesses can also apply direct to The High Street Fund, a charity Sir William Castell has set up to help those businesses who would otherwise go under. It is a national fund, but with a ring-fenced London part. The fund has a total initial commitment of over £3 million cash funding.

The council will be pursuing claims for all funding for which it is eligible.

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL BUKOLA

Does the leader agree with his cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy that the Bermondsey Liberal Democrat councillors did the council a favour voting against a £120,000 roof terrace upgrade and if so, will he ensure that local planning decisions remain with community councils?

RESPONSE

Bermondsey community council was meeting as a planning committee, was acting in a quasi-judicial capacity and could only have taken any decision on proper grounds of planning policy. Consequently, there must be an assumption that any planning body properly advised would have come to the same conclusion on this application.

It is worth noting, however, that were the proposal for £120,000 of expenditure on a roof terrace ever put to the cabinet or any of its members for decision it would have been rejected on grounds of cost. The proposal has never been in either our revenue or capital plans. As it stands the only proposed works are to comply with essential health and safety and fire evacuation requirements.

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR RENATA HAMVAS

What is the timetable for the rolling-out of free, healthy school meals in Southwark primary schools?

RESPONSE

I'm delighted that free, healthy school meals for children were launched in every single Southwark primary school at the start of the new school year.

We have so far launched in reception and year one only. Over the next two years we will be rolling out to all primary school year groups. By September 2013 all children in Southwark primary schools will be entitled to a free, healthy school meal.

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR TIM MCNALLY

Has the chief executive received any additional payments, compensation, special or additional leave or pension arrangements in relation to her resignation? Is the leader satisfied that any such arrangements represent a good deal for Southwark residents?

RESPONSE

The chief executive has given her notice and will leave the employment of the council next May. She has not received any additional payments, compensation payments, special or additional leave arrangements in relation to her resignation. She is entitled to her pension as contractually agreed.

On behalf of the cabinet and everyone at Southwark Council, I would like to pay tribute to the contribution that Annie has made in serving the borough and helping us to deliver our priorities. I would like, on behalf of all councillors, to wish her the very best for the next exciting chapter of her life.

7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CLAIRE HICKSON

Do you think it enhances local democracy when cabinet members attend community council meetings to consult local people on council policy?

RESPONSE

Yes.

The current opposition's attitude towards the leadership of the council visiting community councils and our own in opposition could not be clearer. In opposition we campaigned for a number of years for the then executive to spend more time in community council meetings, to come and explain their policies and hear alternative points of view from local residents. But the current opposition are doing their utmost to make it as difficult and painful as possible for residents to engage the cabinet through community councils. In this respect I believe they are putting their constituents at a disadvantage and doing them a disservice.

If the opposition disagree with council policy then they should have the confidence in their convictions to debate them, not simply block speakers and stifle open discussion.

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ROBIN CROOKSHANK-HILTON

Where will the leader be celebrating bonfire night?

RESPONSE

Unfortunately, I will be on annual leave on 5 November so will not be able to join the local community and my cabinet colleagues in Southwark Park for the fantastic and traditional Guy Fawkes Night and fireworks display that will be taking place there.

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN MORRISSEY

How many Southwark council tenants have been evicted because of involvement in August's disturbances?

RESPONSE

No council tenants had, at time of writing, been evicted, nor had the council pursued the eviction of any tenant with the courts, which would be the next step in the process. We have informed all tenants who face prosecution of crimes associated with the disturbances and looting that they are at risk of eviction if they are found guilty, in line with the terms of their existing tenancy agreements. We are currently reviewing all of the cases to see what or whether taking further action would be appropriate in each case. We will not pursue any kind of punitive action until the guilt of the tenant or resident is proven in a court of law.

Southwark residents expect us to use the full extent our powers as a council to ensure that criminal behaviour is discouraged and prevented where it can be, or mitigated and punished where it occurs. Consideration of eviction is just one of the steps that we are taking in line with this expectation. Other measures include the consideration of anti social behaviour orders and acceptable behaviour contracts for those who took part in the disturbances, providing relief for businesses who were impacted and starting the community conversation to engage with residents on the causes of the disturbances and how we can prevent anything similar happening again.

We are committed to fairness and protecting the vulnerable and will not pursue eviction where it will have a negative impact on children or the vulnerable. But in the most serious circumstances, where we are able to isolate the punishment to the perpetrator, I believe that it is right for us to pursue eviction, in the case of those involved in the disturbances and as a matter of general policy.

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PODDY CLARK

How much money has been paid in redundancy payments, compromise agreements or industrial tribunal settlements to Southwark staff in all departments since 7 May 2010? Please include figures that are agreed but not yet paid.

RESPONSE

The total payments for redundancy in 2010/11 amounted to approximately £1.986 million. For 2011/12 to date, these costs have totalled approximately £3.428 million. Further costs are expected during this year as the council endeavours to reduce spending in line with budget plans agreed by council assembly in February. These costs are yet to be finalised.

Information on compromise agreements and IT settlements is confidential and not available for release

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DARREN MERRILL

September's unemployment figures showed that one in five young people are now out of work, just as the government's austerity programme is starting to bite. What can the council do to try and mitigate the impact of government cuts on our young people?

RESPONSE

The cuts are having a triple whammy impact on young people in Southwark. In the first instance, they go too far and too fast and have not only jeopardised the recovery, but now leave us at real risk of plunging back into recession. The weak economy is leaving young people without the job opportunities that they would have had if they were born five or ten years earlier. In a competitive jobs market, where the number of recruitments remains generally low and applicants for any opening is generally high, it is always going to be hard for people to get their first experience of paid work.

Secondly, cuts have been made to both the education maintenance allowance and university funding.

And thirdly, the significance of the cuts to the council's budget - £34 million in this year alone - means that our capacity to take mitigating steps is markedly reduced.

With the resources that we do have, however, we are taking innovative steps to tackling this new blight on our borough. Our decision to establish the youth fund earlier this year to help young people into work, education or training is helping to lead the debate against the government's penalising cuts to support for young people.

We are also in a unique and privileged position in the centre of London, with all of the opportunities that are brought through large regeneration and development.

For example, The Shard developers have formed a unique partnership with Southwark College. £500,000 of Section 106 money has been used to create a state of the art vocational training facility at the Waterloo campus. The curriculum is being co-designed with the contractors from the development and successful students will have a big advantage when applying for any related jobs.

We have said that the council's central mission is to build a fairer future for all. Delivering on that mission must mean ensuring that our younger residents have work, education and training opportunities. Where we are able to take steps to deliver this directly we will, but where we are not able to do so because of financial constraints or lack of powers then we will take our argument and fight direct to the government.

12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GEOFFREY THORNTON

How many complaints have been received by the noise team outside the new operational hours? How many during the new operational hours? How many have been attended by officers?

RESPONSE

Following the introduction of the new noise team rota in June 2011, 2313 rapid response and 715 non rapid service requests have been received. Of these, 275 were received out of operational hours, this equates to 9% of the total of 3028 received.

The team aims to respond to 95% of all non rapid requests within 3 days, and to 75% of all noise rapid response requests within an hour

Since the introduction of the new rota in June, these targets have been achieved with an overall average of 75% for rapids, and 99% for the three day response calls.

All calls received outside of operational hours are passed to the next operational shift for response, and are allocated as rapid or non-rapid accordingly. 206 of the out of hours calls received were allocated a rapid response, these were responded to at the start of the next shift. Such requests are recorded as outside of target and are included in the statistics presented. The three day response calls remain unaffected.

13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR THE RIGHT REVEREND EMMANUEL OYEWOLE (CAMBERWELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

What is the council doing to help raise awareness for Black History Month?

RESPONSE

The council is involved in and publicises a number of events to celebrate Black History Month in Southwark. This year's calendar of events is as follows:

Tuesday 13 September to Saturday 19 November

Network by Sonia Boyce

Tuesday 18 October 2011

Anti-slavery day

7, 14, 21, 28 October

Beautiful Southwark: celebrating life stories of black elders at the Southwark Pensioners Centre

Saturday 8 October

Southwark black history walk

8, 9, 15, 16 October

For King and Country

Thursday 13 October

Silver Sounds at the Aylesbury Estate

Saturday 15 October

Mother Country

Week commencing Monday 17 October
Black History Month showcase

Friday 21 October
The Salmon Youth Centre Black History Month Experience

Saturday 29 October
Black Business Awards 2011

14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER (BERMONDSEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Since 7 May 2010 how much affordable housing from major planning applications in the north of the borough has been approved as off-site contributions?

RESPONSE

To date planning permission has been for six developments with an off-site commuted sum provided by the developer in lieu of some or all of the on-site affordable housing that they would otherwise provide. As a result over £40 million has been raised for off-site homes.

15. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK (ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

How many hanging baskets have been removed in Southwark since 7 May 2010? Please provide breakdown by community council area.

RESPONSE

To date the number of hanging baskets in parks has not been reduced since May 2010.

The council has, however, reduced the number of baskets in other areas by 283. This is because they were funded by the community council led cleaner greener safer (CGS) funds and the allocated funding - totally £40,000 - has come to an end. There will be a further CGS funded programme from April 2012 which could be used to fund hanging baskets next year should community councils wish to allocate further funds.

16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON (WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Which safer neighbourhood team areas in Southwark have the highest incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour?

RESPONSE

Cathedrals, The Lane, Livesey, East Walworth and Camberwell Green had the highest levels of recorded crime for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011. These five wards represented 37% of the total crimes recorded for the borough over that period.

Crimes by ward Sept 10 to Aug 11	Total	%
Cathedrals	3,690	11%
The Lane	2,468	8%
Livesey	2,218	6%
East Walworth	2,142	6%
Camberwell Green	1,955	6%
Chaucer	1,805	5%
Riverside	1,789	5%
Grange	1,782	5%
Peckham	1,737	5%
Newington	1,661	5%
Faraday	1,513	4%
Rotherhithe	1,445	4%
Brunswick Park	1,426	4%
South Bermondsey	1,408	4%
Nunhead	1,354	4%
College	1,097	3%
Surrey Docks	980	3%
South Camberwell	962	3%
Peckham Rye	937	3%
Village	903	3%
East Dulwich	863	3%
Total	34,135	100%

Cathedrals, The Lane, East Walworth, Livesey and the Grange had the highest incidences of anti-social behaviour (ASB) for the period 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2011. These five wards represented 38% of all ASB incidents in the borough over that period.

Anti-Social Behaviour incidents recorded by ward Aug 10 to July 11	Total	%
Cathedrals	1,829	10%
The Lane	1,457	8%
East Walworth	1,456	8%
Livesey	1,175	6%
Grange	1,137	6%
Camberwell Green	1,078	6%
Brunswick Park	1,045	6%
Riverside	1,025	6%
South Bermondsey	831	5%
Newington	812	4%
Faraday	728	4%
Rotherhithe	709	4%
Village	682	4%
South Camberwell	676	4%
Chaucer	661	3%
Nunhead	636	3%
Surrey Docks	614	3%
Peckham	600	3%
College	483	3%
Peckham Rye	427	2%
East Dulwich	333	2%
Total	18,394	100%

17. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PODDY CLARK (BOROUGH AND BANKSIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Following the closure of the Long Lane housing office, can the member please advise if the mobile housing office is ready to be fully utilised, and what are the costs of its preparation and use? Can the member advise what the repercussions are for the staff formerly working in the Long Lane office, what retraining has been required, and the cost of that training? What are the overall costs to the council of the restructure of the housing service to Borough and Bankside residents?

RESPONSE

The mobile office will be launched in the week commencing 17 October 2011. The first phase of implementation will consist of six estates which will be visited on a weekly basis. The set up costs of the mobile office are in the region of £31,000 with an annual staffing budget provision of approximately £51,000.

The overall number of staff in the housing department has been reduced to deliver the necessary savings to the housing revenue account. This has impacted on some of the staff formerly based at the Long Lane office. The reduction in annual staff costs resulting from the restructure is £3.5 million.

No specific retraining has been necessary as the restructure has resulted in a number of existing employees being assimilated into new or vacant posts. This means that those staff already had the skills to undertake the roles on offer. However, we have taken the opportunity to refresh or upgrade skills where necessary. Overall training relating to the reorganisation is estimated at £30,000.

The housing department has also invested in new technology and working practices to support more flexible, mobile working to deliver personalised services in residents' homes. Total modernisation costs are approximately £700,000.

18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES (PECKHAM COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

The residents living and working in the Peckham community council area recognise and appreciate all the good regeneration money which has been ploughed into Peckham in the past year and the wonderful work done by its residents to develop it as a potential cultural and artistic centre of excellence. However, in light of the recent riots, what is the council doing to help transform the negative perception of Peckham reported in the media into a positive one in which we can all be proud of?

RESPONSE

The disturbances gained a great deal of publicity in the media, and represent a serious issue that council is actively addressing, but it is important to point out that this was a highly unusual occurrence for London, and particularly Peckham. In fact, for those who live in Peckham, the 'Peace Wall' that spontaneously appeared after the disturbances is testament to how most people feel about the area – the wall now has a permanent home in the library.

Peckham is a hugely vibrant, diverse and much loved place with a strong sense of harmony and community, where people get on well. It is fast becoming a hub for the arts and I feel it's important to trust the people who know and love the area to guide the direction its transformation will take, which is why the council's first community conversation took place there after the rioting to gauge public opinion and talk about solutions.

The area action plan for Peckham and Nunhead will see changes which enhance and protect what is already so good about the area - independent shops, small businesses and art spaces - as well as looking to address the issues of housing for the area's growing population, transport, town-centre and station improvements, reducing carbon emissions, crime and anti-social behaviour.

A business fund was created following the disturbances which local businesses can apply for, as well as business rate relief. Allowing Peckham's creative areas to flourish has already gained momentum over the past few months, and the recent disturbances have had no effect on this. Peckham Space is a new arts exhibition space in the town centre, nearby is South London Gallery and both are on the same road as two major London universities of the arts. Nearby, Peckham's Hannah Barry art gallery goes from strength to strength. The council has taken a flexible approach to planning policy and licensing to encourage pop-up bars such as Frank's Cafe and arts enterprises like Peckham Shed theatre to go ahead without heavy-handed bureaucracy standing in their way.

The vision for the future of Peckham will protect its unique character and ensure its reality and its reputation match up. To achieve this, we'll listen all the way to the opinions and concerns of residents, faith groups, the voluntary sector and businesses and be guided by these views.

19. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR VICTORIA MILLS (NUNHEAD AND PECKHAM RYE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Following the public disorder in August, Southwark Council has offered welcome support for smaller businesses. Could the leader provide up to date details of:

- The number of applications to the emergency recovery fund of £100,000 by small businesses on Rye Lane and the surrounding area and the total number of awards made to Rye Lane and other Peckham businesses?
- Whether any of the £100,000 emergency fund is remaining?

RESPONSE

32 small businesses in Rye Lane and the surrounding area (SE15 postcodes, but mainly Rye Lane and Peckham High Street) reported that they had suffered damage or looting in the riots. This number excludes large national chains, but includes individual franchise-holders.

21 applications to the emergency small business recovery fund (ESBRF) have been received from businesses in the same area. Of these, 18 awards have been made and these businesses have received cash transfers. In the remaining three cases, conditional awards have been made, but further information has been requested from the applicants prior to final decision and payment of these awards.

To date, £75,500 has been awarded borough-wide from the ESBRF (including the three conditional awards described above), leaving a balance of £24,500.

20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR THE RIGHT REVEREND EMMANUEL OYEWOLE

What is the cabinet member doing to ensure the third round of Southwark's transition fund reaches as many groups and charities as possible?

RESPONSE

The transition fund was established by the council to help third sector organisations which deliver high quality services to adapt to a changing and challenging funding environment during a period when they are at risk from reductions in Southwark Council funding. One of the criteria specifies that it is only open to voluntary sector organisations in receipt of Southwark Council funding and are able to provide evidence of reduction in this funding for 2011/12. It is not therefore a fund which is open to all voluntary sector organisations.

The purpose of this fund was not simply to replace lost funding but to promote innovation and transformation in an increasingly constrained financial climate. Round 3 of the transition fund provides a further opportunity for voluntary sector organisations to receive funding to continue to deliver in increasingly challenging financial times and to become more sustainable. Round 3 of the transition fund launched on 9 October, which was earlier than originally anticipated with groups being given a total of six weeks to complete their applications.

The council currently provides funding to approximately 300 organisations and has promoted each round of the transition fund in a number of ways. For round 3 Community Action Southwark (CAS) have publicised the fund and are holding workshops for round 3 to provide support on 30 September and 11 October. The information and relevant documents are also posted on the funding portal on the council's website and departmental commissioners have been asked to notify groups funded via their programmes. For some organisations departmental decisions on funding for 2011/12 had still not been made by round 2. As a result these applications will be reconsidered in round 3 and those groups have been contacted and invited to submit additional information should they wish to do so. Any organisation funded by Southwark Council that was unsuccessful in previous rounds based on the quality of the application has been provided with written feedback and advice on how to improve them. These organisations are eligible to re-apply to round 3.

In addition, for round 3 there has also been a change to the criteria which previously precluded organisations from receiving both national transition funding and council transition funding. It is clear that in order to respond to the more flexible national picture and to the severe pressures that the sector is under, it would be helpful to add flexibility into the Southwark criteria.

For round 3 therefore this requirement has been modified to give the discretion to allow awards to organisations where national funding has been awarded or where applications to other national transition funds are pending. Where this is the case applications will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Further to officer recommendations on the organisations shortlisted, I will take a decision on round 3 of the transition fund in November.

21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NICK DOLEZAL

Even though the council is no longer in a position to provide as much direct funding to voluntary sector organisations, the local authority still has a role to play in creating an environment in which voluntary groups can thrive. What is the council doing to ensure it builds such an environment for voluntary groups in Southwark?

RESPONSE

Reduced government funding will undoubtedly have an impact on voluntary groups in the borough. However, the council does indeed have a role in unlocking the full potential of the third sector. Southwark has a large and vibrant voluntary sector with 1,613 registered charities some of which are the largest national voluntary sector providers. The impact

which the council has had on the sector is demonstrated in the Cabinet Offices' National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises. This survey measures the experience of third sector organisations locally specifically highlighting the contribution each council makes and how this lends to encouraging a diverse, independent and vibrant voluntary sector.

There are many factors that contribute to a thriving and independent third sector, including some which the council may not be able to directly influence, however, our success in working in partnership with the sector, commissioning and in building sustainable relationships has been acknowledged by the fact that we have greatly improved our score over the last two years, with only two other authorities receiving a higher ranking. In relation to the question 'Taking everything into account, overall, how do the statutory bodies in your local area influence your organisation's success?' There was a significant increase in the percentage of organisations who feel the local statutory sector has a positive influence on their success from 15% in 2008 to 23% in 2010. This is a statistically significant rise of 8% and is higher than the national average of 18%.

The council continues to work in partnership with Community Action Southwark and the wider voluntary and community services (VCS) on:

- Supporting a dynamic partnership relationship through the council/VCS liaison group
- The commissioning task group with VCS representation seeks to improve productivity and efficiency in this area
- Supporting the VCS to identify and work with potential private sector partners in Southwark to maximise business engagement with local communities.

The council has also sought to minimise the impact of funding reductions on the sector by introducing the transition and innovation funds and to encourage the sector to transform and seek ways to become more sustainable in the current challenging financial climate.

22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR CHRIS BROWN

Can he outline in more detail the council's new volunteering strategy?

RESPONSE

Our volunteer strategy has been developed through the 2012 volunteering and employment sub group, with Volunteer Centre Southwark providing professional and local expertise and knowledge throughout. It is the product of cross council work and is aimed at promoting the 2012 Games; encouraging the voluntary sector to create quality volunteering opportunities; raising awareness of diverse volunteering opportunities; and increasing the diversity of volunteers.

The 2012 Games offers a unique opportunity for Londoners to become involved and also provides great impetus to raise the profile of volunteering more locally. 70,000 volunteers will help make the London 2012 Games a success and in as much as it is important to do everything we can to create a London 2012 volunteering legacy for the borough, it is also very important to remember the existing enthusiasm for volunteering in Southwark.

In recently signing off the volunteer strategy for the borough, I was keen that the contribution of Southwark's people was acknowledged. The strategy offers an insight into some of the efforts of volunteers in the borough and provides a base to promote and improve the social wellbeing of their areas. Volunteers are key to supporting Southwark's communities; as almost every voluntary group is reliant upon volunteers.

The strategy acknowledges the barriers to volunteering for people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Working with our partners, including the volunteer centre, it is anticipated

that volunteering opportunities will contribute towards breaking down some of the barriers between people, building links between different communities, raising awareness of each other's identities, and thereby increasing community cohesion. The 2006-2016 community plan has a headline objective to increase the number of people who volunteer and this strategy will contribute to achieving that overall objective.

A full evaluation of the outcome of the volunteering strategy will take place soon after the end of the London 2012 Games, and a renewed volunteering strategy will be created for the borough soon afterwards.

23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE BOWMAN

What help is being provided by the council to businesses in Walworth Road affected by recent looting?

RESPONSE

140 businesses across the borough reported that they were affected by the recent disturbances and looting, and 30 of these were in the Walworth Road area.

The businesses in our high streets and town centres play a big part in the local economy of the borough and the gravity of damage caused to businesses as a result of the rioting was recognised immediately by the council. Community wardens visited or surveyed all businesses reported to have been affected in the days immediately following. The support from the community and other traders during this time was inspiring and spoke volumes about the wider community's feelings and concerns about the unrest.

Having taken stock of the impacts on business, the council noted the need for emergency action to help businesses to secure their premises and to re-stock in order to continue trading. The council therefore introduced the following measures to assist the affected businesses in all parts of the borough as a means to assist an immediate return to trading and to secure longer term measures to restore confidence, rebuild trade and regenerate the areas affected:

- Establishing an emergency recovery fund of £100,000 to help small businesses in particular get back on their feet
- Publicising how to apply for temporary relief from the payment of business rates
- Providing a one stop shop for business advice and help from the council's business desk, covering advice on insurance claims under the Riot (Damages) Act and information on other charitable sources of emergency business support such as the High Street Fund
- Bidding for assistance from the Mayor of London's regeneration fund and trying to maximise funding from other government schemes to help business areas and high streets in the borough to recover following the immediate clear-up and emergency response.

24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR COLUMBA BLANGO

What is the cost to the council of the community conversations, including officer time, being carried out following the riots?

RESPONSE

It has cost around £6,270 to deliver the community conversations, including publicity materials, equipment hire and transportation costs.

The activity has been led by the community engagement team, with support from officers in communications. Planning and delivering engagement events and developing publicity materials are part of the everyday work of the aforementioned teams, so no additional costs were incurred in terms of officer time.

The community conversations are an important opportunity for the council to better understand what happened during the disorder across London on 8 August 2011, and more locally here in Southwark. The disorder caused great concern to residents, traders, businesses and the wider community and so the conversations have been aimed at listening to what everyone in the community can learn from in order to avoid a repeat of the destruction and criminality that touched the whole of London.

Working alongside the leader, cabinet members and ward councillors, officers across the community engagement and communications teams supported the community conversations on four Saturdays in September. A number of local volunteers were also on hand in each location. The events were held in Surrey Quays, Peckham, Walworth Road and Dog Kennel Hill during September and the events gave local people a chance to share their thoughts on what happened during the disturbances, some of the causes and how we could move forward positively from it. The survey has also been available online for people to fill in.

We have so far collected over 730 completed surveys and some 250 pledges from residents. This information will be analysed over the coming weeks and we aim to share some feedback with residents as soon as possible.

25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS

Does the cabinet member think that the additional security measures taken when the Ministry of Sound supporters visited Tooley Street to deliver their petition was an appropriate and proportional response to a legitimate and peaceful activity? Can you provide the cost of having the wardens there and outline which community was deprived of their wardens during this time?

Note: This question has been referred to the cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety

RESPONSE

The wardens were requested to attend Tooley Street by the building security manager on 16 September 2011. This was based on information and concerns raised, that there were to be 150 protestors attending Tooley Street.

Six wardens attended at 11.00am and left at 1.00pm. Approximately 75 protestors attended. The wardens were from the response service which provides a reactive borough wide service. The distraction from other duties was managed and officers were able to carry out their duties at other times in the day. The cost of providing the service was just over £400.

The request for wardens to attend Tooley Street in relation to a petition or protest is made following a risk assessment by the security officers. On this occasion the request was made following late information that was received and was made by planning officers. Wardens are on hand to ensure that there is no breach of the peace rather than to provide a security function.

26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR DENISE CAPSTICK

How many black minority ethnic staff have been made redundant or given early retirement since 7 May 2010?

RESPONSE

Significant reductions in the general funding received by the council from the government has meant that amongst other measures, the council has had to look at its workforce to ensure that it operates efficiently in these difficult times.

Before opting for redundancies for permanent staff, in implementing required savings the council first look at existing vacant posts, agency or temporary staff as well as natural wastage. The council places greater emphasis on the redeployment process and supporting staff to mitigate and reduce redundancies.

In implementing the budget proposals for each financial year, the departments undergo thorough equalities impact assessments which consider the impact of staff reductions on the representation of the workforce to ensure that the way we deal with all staff concerning redundancies is fair. Overall impact will be considered at year end as a key part of the workforce report.

The details of black and minority ethnic staff redundancies and retirement are below.

1. Proportion of staff in-post based on broad ethnic groups

Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Grand Total
4%	38%	3%	3%	52%	100%

BME staff: 48%

White staff: 52%

Notes:

Figures have been rounded to whole numbers.

The percentages at this level are unchanged from April 2011, e.g. White was 52% etc.

2. Leavers on redundancy and early retirement year ending 31 March 2011

Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Grand Total	
11	54	4	4	82	155	Number
7%	35%	3%	3%	53%	100%	percentage

BME staff: 47%

White staff: 53%

3. Leavers on redundancy and early retirement April - August 2011

Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Grand Total	
6	85	5	7	94	197	Number
3%	43%	2.5%	3.5%	48%	100%	percentage

~ rounded to 0.5%

BME staff: 52%

White staff: 48%

Note: Reviews for 2011/12 are not yet complete and redundancy figures will therefore change

27. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PATRICK DIAMOND

What do you think the potential risks to Southwark are of the government's white paper on public services, if fully implemented?

RESPONSE

The white paper seeks a new approach to public services. It calls for open public services, with users having greater control over the services they receive. The principles behind the white paper are well founded; principles of choice, decentralisation, fairness and accountability. However, in amongst these sound principles and others pursued in the paper, we are concerned with the government's proposals for their implementation.

This administration has already taken steps towards providing high quality and efficient services which enable people to have greater choice, i.e. in implementing personal budgets, opening up the council budget process, delivering on our commitments, as well as through our fairer future vision. We are responding to the government consultation to ensure that the white paper supports this work and meets the needs of local people.

The white paper provides simple answers to respond to diverse needs rather than a more substantial approach which is sensitive and flexible to the differing needs of local people; the risks lie in how the principles are implemented. The greatest risk is that implementation is imposed centrally which does not enable local councils to make informed decision on implementation based on local needs. Some specific potential risks include:

- Not adequately supporting the more vulnerable or disengaged and isolated, who need extra support to fully realise the benefits of choice and decentralisation.
- Increased bureaucracy and prescription, for example through the 'frameworks for choice in individual services'.
- Creating a more complex system leading to a more fragmented approach to service delivery.

The government will however continue to consult on their approach and from November onwards we will be able to take a view on the more detailed plans.

28. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR VICTORIA MILLS

Which central government grants went towards Southwark's voluntary and community sector budget in 2009?

RESPONSE

A number of central government grants went towards Southwark's voluntary and community sector (VCS) budget in the financial year 2009/10. These include:

- Supporting People (Adult Health & Social Care)
- Working Neighbourhoods Fund (Cross-departmental - Regeneration & Neighbourhoods, Communities, Law & Governance, Environment & Leisure)
- Aiming High (Children's Services)
- Sure Start (Children's Services)
- Carers Grant (Adult Health & Social Care & Children's Services)
- Children's Fund (Children's Services)

- Children's & Adolescents Mental Health Services Grant (Department of Health - Children's Services)
- LINK (Department of Health - Communities, Law & Governance)
- Preventing Violent Extremism (mainly Environment & Leisure)
- Safer Stronger Communities Fund (mainly Environment & Leisure, cross departmental)
- Youth Taskforce (Environment & Leisure)
- Young People's Substance Misuse (Environment & Leisure)

(Below – all Environment & Leisure, Adult Learning)

- Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities
- Family Language Literacy and Numeracy
- Personal Community Development Learning
- First Steps
- Family Learning Impact Funding.

Funding was drawn from area based grants which included a number of ring fenced funding streams as well as less prescriptive funds.

council funding to the VCS in 2009/10 amounted to £3,912,293 in grants and £31,687,876 in contracts. These aggregate figures include the central government grants referred to above.

A challenge in identifying the exact amount of central government grants that went towards Southwark's VCS budget in 2009 is that some of the grants were ring-fenced and designated for specific activities whilst other grant funding was less prescriptive in nature. Some funding was for partnership activity that included VCS organisations but not exclusively so.

In addition a number of other central government grants that were awarded to the VCS budget in 2009 were routed through other non-council national and regional accountable bodies including the Arts Council, London Development Agency and Legal Services Commission. The range of funding streams and channels for their allocation and delivery present a complex funding picture. The total funding figure should be viewed within this context.

Reductions in grant funding from central government for 2010/11 indicate a reduction of £5.1m of which £3.3m relates directly to projects funded through area based grants. These include reductions of £2.2m from children's services, £0.7m from funding allocated cross-departmentally to Working Neighbourhoods Fund projects and £0.3m in Supporting People Administration Fund.

29. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GETTLESON

What is the council doing to promote LGBT History Month?

RESPONSE

To promote LGBT History Month in February 2011, the council worked in partnership with the borough's LGBT network to hold a launch event and run a small grants scheme to fund a diverse programme of events across Southwark.

The month was launched with a Queer Question Time event on 1 February 2011 with the BBC's Evan Davis and other special guests at Tooley Street, which was attended by over 250 people. A small grants scheme, jointly funded by the council and the local LGBT

Network, supported a programme of other events and activities across the month, with over 1,000 people taking part.

Southwark's LGBT network chair, Gaby Charing, described this year's events to mark history month in Southwark as "the best ever" while Sue Sanders, co-founder of the UK-wide LGBT History Month, said that it was "a model for how every local authority should work with its LGBT communities".

Plans are currently being prepared as to how the month will be marked in February 2012. The council is committed to supporting a launch event in early February next year. This will most likely happen once again at the council's Tooley Street offices and will build on the success of last year's event. In addition, officers are currently talking to members of the local LGBT network to explore ways in which the network might be able to fund another small grants scheme for 2012.

LGBT History Month has been celebrated in Southwark since its inception in 2005, and the council will continue to work alongside its partners in the LGBT community to promote history month, and indeed throughout the year.

30. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR MARK WILLIAMS

What plans do the council have for the roof terrace at Tooley Street?

RESPONSE

As I stated in the Southwark News on 15 September, I remain of the view that spending a large sum of money on turning the roof of the Tooley Street offices into hospitality space is daft.

As stated in that report, this proposal had not been agreed by any cabinet member and we were not aware that this proposal had been submitted. If they had, we would have acted quickly to stop such proposals going any further.

I have instructed officers that they must share any proposed planning application for council offices with me beforehand so that similar issues can be avoided in the future.

Members should note that there may be the requirement for some health and safety work on the roof above the front part of the Tooley Street offices, as it does not currently comply with building regulations or the full requirements of statutory health and safety legislation. In order to provide safe and secure access for maintenance activity and support its utilisation as a alternative fire escape route as part of the Tooley Street emergency procedure arrangements officers will be assessing the minimum maintenance works required to bring this area up to a safe and compliant standard.

Costs of this work will be minimised while meeting health and safety regulations and funding contained within existing budgets. It is unlikely that the solution will allow the council to use the facility for events or hospitality.

31. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL COYLE

How many people in Southwark are eligible for council tax benefit and how is the council planning to address government changes to council tax benefit?

RESPONSE

	Nov-08	Apr-09	Apr-10	Apr-11	Jun-11	Aug-11
Southwark Council Tax Recipients	32,780	33,480	33,920	34,980	35,300	35,468

The current and past numbers of customers eligible for council tax benefits (CTB) is above.

- Over the past two and a half years CTB has risen by 15% nationally
- London has 17% of national CTB recipients (circa. 800,000).

As part of the government's spending review of 2010, the government announced that it intends to localise CTB from 2013/14 with a 10% reduction in expenditure. The government has now issued a consultation document seeking views on how to implement local schemes. The closing date for responses is 14 October 2011.

I am deeply concerned that this could mean that the council will have to make choices about which people in receipt of benefits will be eligible for council tax benefit in a way that potentially penalises those already in a difficult financial position. This is a deeply unpleasant policy that the government is pursuing that will hurt Southwark and its residents disproportionately.

Whilst we are glad that this benefit will be ring-fenced for pensioners, the proposals as they currently stand will mean that significantly more than 10% of everyone else currently eligible for council tax benefit will lose out.

Southwark will make representations and respond to this consultation document and will also form part of a collective response from London Councils.

32. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ALTHEA SMITH

August's rioting and looting stretched Southwark's police to the limit. What impact will the government's cuts to the police budget have on Southwark's ability to cope with future disturbances?

RESPONSE

The disturbances in early August placed a considerable strain on police resources over the summer months as well as the commitment to a subsequent long term investigation which has amounted to £41 million to date (as at 2 September 2011).

As of this month, Southwark has 829 police officers. This is 80 less than this time last year, a 9% decrease. Of these 829, 30 officers are dedicated to the Operation Withern investigation into the August disorder.

The Metropolitan Police Service Southwark is working closely with the Metropolitan Police Authority and has been in discussions with the Home Office with regards to recovering the costs of the disorder. These figures are exclusive of costs as a result of claims under the Riot Damages Act 1886.

The disturbances have also highlighted a number of emerging issues such as the need to increase the number of officers who have enhanced public order training. This will further increase pressure on police budgets.

The Metropolitan Police Service Southwark will continue to work closely with the council to ensure that we make best use of the services that are available to reduce crime and the fear of crime. I have every confidence that the borough's force will use its stretched resources as effectively as possible but it is clear that government cuts to their strength make the police's job across London increasingly difficult.

33. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ROWENNA DAVIS

What impact will the implementation of the agency workers directive have on the council?

RESPONSE

The agency workers directive will pose a number of implications for the council, first from 1 October 2011 (when it comes into force) and more specifically 12 weeks later when the new terms have to be applied.

The directive allows the council (for the first time) to move to true transparency on rates. The directive requires that for any agency staff with assignments greater than 12 weeks, they have comparative pay rates and many of their terms and conditions are also comparative. We have worked to ensure processes are in place to comply fully with these changes.

The major impact will be on low graded posts - street cleaners - who will enjoy a pay increase. In many of these cases, this will mean ensuring that these staff are now moved on to the London Living Wage.

It is estimated that the extra cost to the council will be greater than £500,000 although efforts are underway to renegotiate prices with agency which will squeeze their margins; full financial impact will be included in the budget report for 2012/13.

There are approaches that would avoid the council having to equalise pay for these agency workers, such as the Swedish derogation model. However, I am firmly of the mind that it would be immoral to try to find a wheeze to avoid implementing the agency workers directive in full and welcome this opportunity to ensure that these agency workers will be guaranteed the London Living Wage for the first time.

The council has been successfully reducing the numbers of agency staff used (latest snapshot indicates 342 staff) and this will mitigate some of the financial impact.

34. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS

What impact will the takeover of Vangent by General Dynamics have on the services the former provides to the council?

RESPONSE

Officers have taken legal advice regarding the proposed sale of Vangent to General Dynamics on or around 1 October 2011. The implications of the sale require further clarification and officers have written to Vangent asking them for the relevant information.

35. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL

How much has the council spent on municipal entertainment since 7 May 2010, including the Mayor's civic events. Can he set out the total budget for such expenditure and events up to the end of April 2012?

RESPONSE

The total spends since 7 May 2010 has been £43,835 (£26,684 for 2010/11 and £17,151 within 2011/12 to date with commitments through to January). This covers expenditure on:

- Holocaust Memorial Day
- Mayor-Making - Constitutional Council
- Civic Award Ceremony
- Armed Forces Day
- Armistice Service
- Remembrance Service.

The annual budget for these events is £35,307 and has been for the last two years.

Since May 2010 the council has spent £283,000 in 2010/2011 (all happening after May 2010) supporting 10 borough-wide events, Irish festival, Bermondsey carnival and parade, Rotherhithe festival, The Mix for young people, Carnival Del Pueblo, Thames festival, fireworks, LGBT event and Boundless for disabled residents in 2010/11.

For 2011/12 expenditure of £247,000 has been committed for events including the three new events that were agreed by council assembly when the budget was set this year (Bermondsey carnival, the Elephant and the Nun and the fireworks which are now being arranged).

Total spend across the period is therefore £530,000. The annual budget is currently £360,000.

The list does not include Black History Month, the Care Leaver's Event or the Leader's Fairer Future Event. Those events are funded from corporate events.

36. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON

How much was spent on taxis and minicabs for senior officers and cabinet members since 7 May 2010?

RESPONSE

Between May 2010 and September 2011 (17 months) spend on taxis and minicabs are as follows:

- cabinet members - £1,455 (approx.)
- senior officers (inc. strategic directors) - £5,475 (approx.)

The cabinet is currently considering with officers the implications of ending contractual minicab arrangements for council business and to further encourage the use of public transport as far as that is possible.

37. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN

How many eating establishments have been closed down by the environmental health department due to mice? Why hasn't similar action been taken in the kitchen and eating areas at the council offices?

RESPONSE

Last year Southwark's environmental health officers (EHOs) used hygiene emergency prohibition orders to close seven food businesses, five of which related to very poor hygiene conditions linked to a rodent (mice or rat) infestation.

Hygiene emergency prohibition orders can only be used when there is a clear and imminent risk to public health. The presence of rodent infestation in a food premises does not itself mean there is an imminent risk to health. Providing satisfactory measures are in place to protect food from contamination by mice, food businesses cannot be required to stop trading.

In the case of food services that are provided by external agencies operating from with council premises the same standards apply and provided measures are in place to eradicate the problem and keep food free from contamination then there is no imminent risk to public health.

In Tooley Street and other council offices we operate within the same regulatory framework and standards that the council's EHOs inspect and enforce on. There are effective proactive and reactive pest control regimes in place managed in line with industry best practice. Where infestations occur in Tooley Street this is managed through this regime alongside good hygiene practices protecting food from any potential contamination ensuring a safe environment for staff and visitors.

38. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

How much time and money, including officer time, has been spent on delays at Success House Youth Club in South Bermondsey?

RESPONSE

We have been working to ensure that both the lease on the building and the programme of activities for young people are suitable. It was important to negotiate an appropriate lease to ensure it did not restrict usage or prove difficult in meeting the needs of residents in the future.

We accept this has taken longer than first anticipated, however officer time has been spent on negotiating the lease and planning the opening, to ensure the best deal for both the local authority and the young people who will be accessing the new provision.

39. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES

How many planning applications have been heard by each community council over the last three years? How many applications have been refused and what are the costs associated with any lost appeals by each community council?

Note: This question has been referred to the cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy

RESPONSE

To Follow

40. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER

Southwark will shortly be collecting sufficient food waste that if it was anaerobically digested could power much of Southwark's waste system and make it carbon neutral. Will the administration ask Veolia to join it in applying for a government anaerobic digestion loan fund to make this possible?

RESPONSE

Whilst we welcome any opportunity to improve the efficiency and environmental benefits related to the treatment of the borough's waste, applying for a government anaerobic digestion loan fund would not be suitable for Southwark.

Anaerobic digestion (AD) was considered as one of the waste treatment technologies for use at the new integrated waste management facility currently being built on the Old Kent Road. However, due to the size of site required for an AD plant (at least 3 acres) and the council's overall waste management requirements, it was not possible to include one at the Old Kent Road site.

As well as the difficulty in finding a suitable site in the borough, the organic waste that the council collects (which is mixed food and garden waste) is better suited to another waste treatment technology, known as in-vessel composting. AD technology is best suited to processing purely food/catering waste.

All garden and food waste collected in Southwark is processed using an in-vessel facility at Sittingbourne in Kent.

41. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT AND THE OLYMPICS FROM COUNCILLOR DAN GARFIELD

What projects have been awarded Southwark 2012 capital legacy funding and what will be their value in creating a substantial legacy for sports activities in Southwark?

RESPONSE

As yet no project has been awarded Southwark 2012 capital legacy funding. The capital legacy group has made their final recommendations for a £2 million package of capital investment to Councillor Livingstone, cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety. The recommendations were published on the council's website on the 10 October 2011 in an individual decision maker (IDM) report. The IDM will be formally considered during October and recommends that the following projects are funded:

- Bethwin Road Playground's bid for a multi use games area in Bethwin Road for £95,000
- Southwark Tennis Club's bid for support for a BMX Track for Burgess Park for £150,000
- The Camberwell Baths Campaign's bid for a further phased of refurbishment to the Camberwell Leisure Centre sports hall for £490,000
- Herne Hill Velodrome Trust's bid for a contribution towards refurbishment of the Herne Hill Velodrome track for £400,000
- Athenlay Football Club's bid for a sports ground development in Homestall Road for £175,000
- Peckham Town Football Club's bid for an outdoor disability multi-sports court for £85,000
- Fusion's bid for a disability pool hoist for the Peckham Pulse Healthy Living Centre for £5,600
- The parks and open spaces service's bid for upgrading the Peckham Rye football pitches & changing rooms for £200,000
- The sports service's bid for a contribution towards the redevelopment of the Southwark Park sports complex for £370,000
- Trinity in Camberwell's bid for an outdoor sports area in Camberwell for £30,000

Southwark 2012 capital legacy projects have been subject to a careful selection process which has considered, among other criteria, the ability of project proposals to measurably increase participation in and improve access to sport in the borough.

Southwark's legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will be an increase in the numbers of people accessing and participating in sports or physical activity in the borough.

According to Sport England research, Southwark not only has one of the lowest numbers of active people in the UK, but is also an area of very high demand for sports facilities when compared nationally and locally.

If the borough is to increase its numbers of active people, it must have the facilities to support them. The Southwark 2012 capital legacy fund seeks to close the gap between the supply of sports opportunities and their demand by supporting projects that refurbish or construct quality facilities that will improve the access to physical activity, broaden the range of sports on offer and get more people in the borough active.

42. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT AND THE OLYMPICS FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES

How many community groups have been involved in the preparation and events for The Elephant and the Nun? What do you think has been the value for the communities involved and those who attended?

RESPONSE

72 groups were originally invited to take part in the partnership group and planning of The Elephant and the Nun. This does not include the council departments who were also invited.

27 groups took an active role in the planning meetings in developing the overall idea for The Elephant and the Nun, and specific projects for the festival. This again does not include the council departments involved.

15 groups (again non-council) were involved in the active delivery of projects for the festival. Several of these groups and projects had involvement from additional groups, details of which are still being collated for an evaluation report on the festival.

Arts, culture and heritage are very important to the community in Southwark and an integral part of local economy and encourage communities to work together.

Participation can raise horizons, increase life chances, tap potential, raise aspirations as well as provide positive activities that can divert from anti-social behaviour. Projects can also contribute to educational attainment, health through feelings of worth, engagement and well-being.

The groups involved in projects for The Elephant and the Nun are all from the local area and involved the local community including two schools, and have had the opportunity to create a positive, vibrant celebration for local communities, for their neighbours.

The festival provided many different platforms for cultural and artistic expression and engaged with a wide variety of people.

The festival was an exciting mixture of entertainment including Latin American culture, old English traditional entertainment, music, crafts, food and local groups able to promote their work.

43. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER

Blue Badge fraud is a significant issue to older people and disabled people in Southwark, what is being done to cut down on this illegal use of Blue Badges and how many prosecutions and confiscations have been made in the last year?

RESPONSE

The council takes Blue Badge fraud seriously; such fraud might involve misuse of valid badges by friends and family members who should not be using the badge, or by drivers using lost, stolen or counterfeit badges. Whatever the circumstances, illegal use of a Blue Badge by a person not entitled to use the badge is a criminal offence.

There have been no prosecutions in Southwark to date as a result of illegal use however approximately 15 badges have been confiscated through working alongside other agencies and other local authorities. The council will continue to pursue fraudulent use of a Blue Badge and will aim to prosecute abusers. Where illegal use is successfully prosecuted, a fine of £1,000 can be levied on the individual as well as the individual receiving a criminal record.

The following action is being taken to stamp out illegal use of Blue Badges in the borough:

- Vangent now carry out document verification fraud checks when a new application is received.
- Interviews with the badge holder once the council have been notified of a badge being misused. A warning is given to the individual explaining that if there is repeated misuse, the badge could be withdrawn.
- Prosecutions by other local authorities against Southwark badge holders, where those authorities have found that a badge has been misused.
- The council is currently working with Lambeth, Croydon, Islington and Camden councils in order to eliminate and minimise the fraudulent use of badges.
- The council is assisting the national fraud initiative and currently working through the data received to check potential fraudulent cases.

There will be a review of the Blue Badge and Freedom Pass service to improve customer access. This is being done in conjunction with changes by the Department of Transport to the Blue Badge scheme. We aim to reduce the cost of processing badges, speed up applications and free up resources to concentrate on fraud issues. As part of this we are reviewing our anti-fraud measures (including issues around online applications) and are meeting with the audit manager to discuss auditing the service specifically around fraud.

The service has undertaken a range of anti-fraud initiatives to date, and we continue to build on this by focusing on excellence in customer care and developing a robust system to identify and prosecute fraudulent use of badges.

44. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL NOBLET

Does the cabinet member believe that all of Southwark's adventure playgrounds should be open during the same hours regardless of where they are located in the borough?

RESPONSE

The adventure playgrounds do not currently all have the same opening hours. Children and young people attending the playgrounds can influence the start and finish time of a session and/or the specific days the playground is open for the supervised play sessions.

The opening hours are set locally for each adventure playground and are dependent on local need and demand, together with the total level of resources available.

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

How many tickets have been issued by the mobile camera car and for what infringements? Please provide a breakdown by type of infringement.

RESPONSE

Since 1994, Southwark Council has had responsibility for the control and enforcement of all on street parking throughout the borough (except for the designated red routes). In 2002, the council started CCTV enforcement of vehicles driving in bus lanes. In March 2003 we began enforcing parking controls using CCTV and in September 2005 we took on responsibility for the enforcement of certain traffic violations such as banned turns, no entry points and one way directional signs.

As highlighted in the council's annual parking report in 2008/09 in partnership with APCOA Parking the council purchased two Smart cars equipped with a CCTV camera on top of a 2 metre periscope. These two vehicles will be used to enforce all contraventions but have been particularly useful at locations where traditional civil enforcement officers have found it difficult to enforce due to problems with the nature and timing of the contraventions.

Since the introduction of enforcement by mobile camera cars on 24 November 2009, there have been 14,097 penalty charge notices (PCN) issued for parking and moving traffic contraventions (to 30 September 2011) as a result of their action.

Contravention description	No of PCNs issued
Parked in restricted street during prescribed hours	1,532
Parked in restricted street where loading ban is in operation	2,659
Parked in a resident parking permit holders bay without displaying a resident permit	834
Parked in a permit bay without displaying a valid permit	9
Parked in a resident or shared use bay without displaying a valid permit	83
Parked in a suspended parking bay	5
Parked in a bay not designated for the class of vehicle	3,455
Parked incorrectly / dangerously in a parking bay	2
Parked in a loading bay	8
Double Parked	601
Parked in front of a dropped kerb	1
Park in a bay for longer than permitted time	1
Parked in a disabled badge holders bay without displaying a valid disabled badge	77
Parked in a restricted bus stop	158
Parked on Yellow zig zag marking outside the school	149
Parked a HGV vehicle on the footway	1
Parked on the footway	610

Parked on pedestrian crossing marked with white zig zag	7
Parked in a yellow box junction	6
Failing to comply with no entry for certain class of vehicle	2
Turning right / left where prohibited	3,891
Failing to comply with no entry sign	6

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

What action have you been taking to assist safe journeys to and from school in Bermondsey?

RESPONSE

We offer support to all schools in the Bermondsey area in completing a travel plan. Travel plans encourage sustainable modes of transport and provide a way for schools to identify safety concerns to the council. To date 14 out of 16 schools in the Bermondsey area have completed a plan.

Road safety inputs are offered to all of our schools in Bermondsey throughout the year. Road safety supports the work of the school travel plans by ensuring practical training and education is delivered to the vulnerable school pupil. A range of training is offered to schools but it is up to them which elements of training they wish to accept.

Road safety introduces the new vulnerable road user to his or her environment and provides them with the basic tools to interact safely within the road environment.

Currently road safety is offered to schools in the following measures:

- **Practical pedestrian training** is offered to the year 3 pupils. The training introduces the new road user to the road environment on a short walk. Basic skills of looking and listening are developed in the young child. Parents are encouraged to attend the sessions.
- **Cyclist Training programmes** is offered to year 5 and 6 pupils to prepare them for a journey to their new secondary school.
- **Theatre in Education** we currently have a show aimed at key stage 1 pupils. Once again the young child is introduced to the concept of crossing the road listening & looking through a fun play with puppet hedgehogs.
- **Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme** the scheme is aimed at year 5 and 6 pupils and empowers the young child to deliver talks, run competitions and address road safety concerns in the or around the school.
- **Junior Citizen** is a multi agency run scheme delivering road safety as one of the scenarios. Pupils are encouraged to act as responsible citizens.

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

Would the cabinet member acknowledge that the proposed temporary removal of Greenland Pier will have a substantial adverse effect on the many hundreds of residents who use it daily, including some with young children, and would he tell us what is being done to mitigate this, by means of an alternative temporary pier, additional bus transport and any other measures?

RESPONSE

The temporary removal of Greenland Pier is necessary to ensure the pier complies with industry standards with respect to health and safety. The pier has not been inspected out of

the water since its installation in 1989 and this is now due. I regret the impact that the withdrawal of the pier will have on the river service users and I will ensure that the period that it is out of service is kept to a minimum. However the responsibility for offering alternative means of transport rests with the transport provider Thames Clippers and Transport for London.

council officers have met and will continue to liaise with officers from Transport for London and the Thames Clipper service to determine the best time for the piers removal and possible alternatives and ensure that users are fully informed of progress.

48. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN

How many council tenants have been evicted for domestic violence since 7 May 2010?

RESPONSE

One council tenant has been evicted since May 2010 for domestic violence.

One other has had his tenancy terminated whilst in prison following a criminal conviction for violence against his spouse.

Four other perpetrators have been excluded from entering their council tenancies by the use of occupation orders, non molestation orders and restraining orders. Victims are supported by domestic violence advocates commissioned by the council throughout the process.

49. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL

How many fire risk assessments still have outstanding action points by ward, and for East Dulwich ward, please list these action points and state when all fire risk assessments will be placed on the council website?

RESPONSE

All blocks across the borough have had fire risk assessments (FRA) completed, and whilst there are still action points to resolve, many have already been dealt with. It is not possible to list the outstanding actions by ward, as FRAs are under constant review and are updated on a regular basis.

With regard to those actions remaining, the investment strategy and programme for resolution has been agreed with the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and reviewed in a joint strategic meeting with council officers on a quarterly basis.

We are taking a risk management approach to dealing with the FRA actions, and will be reducing the overall risks at those blocks identified at substantial and moderate risk to a tolerable level. In taking this approach, not all identified actions need to be eradicated.

I have asked officers to investigate how FRAs can be placed on to the council's website. But it is not recognised best practice to publish a multitude of pdfs on websites as there are concerns around accessibility issues. We are working on making it as easy as possible for people to quickly get any FRA they request as we are committed to being totally open and transparent on this issue. In the meantime, FRAs can be accessed for individual blocks via the e-form request. This is a commitment of the administration that we are proud of and will action despite severe budgetary constraints from the Liberal Democrat/Tory coalition.

50. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NICK STANTON

How much has the options consultation for the Four Squares Estate cost, including officer time, and how much has this been increased by the delays that are now apparent?

RESPONSE

The Four Squares options appraisal has to date been undertaken by staff within the regeneration and neighbourhoods department alongside their normal duties, it is therefore not possible to separately identify the cost of this work.

To date, there have been no costs incurred for any consultants' work, although the independent residents' advisor has been appointed. The estimated cost of this work is £40,309. Although the exercise has not made the progress that we would have liked, we believe that some of the delay has been caused by our attempts to improve the process, particularly in relation to resident involvement.

Following consultation we have adhered to the wishes and pace of residents after scurrilous rumours were spread about demolishing the estate.