

## SUPPORTING NARRATIVE FOR BUDGET PROPOSALS

### ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

#### Overview

The Environment & Leisure department delivers services that make a real difference to the everyday lives of all residents and visitors. The majority of our operations are frontline services: they physically improve the environment, they provide opportunities for health and enjoyment or they help improve safety and confidence. The Strategic Director is also the Electoral Registration and Returning Officer, so the department includes the electoral services team. The other services can be broadly grouped into:

- **Public Realm** covering parks and open spaces, parking, highways, transport planning, cleaner greener safer initiatives, cemeteries and crematorium services
- **Environmental Services** covering waste management and refuse collection, street cleaning and recycling, carbon reduction and energy projects
- **Community Safety and Enforcement** covering the Safer Southwark Partnership, drug and alcohol teams, emergency planning, environmental health, community wardens, antisocial behaviour unit, environmental enforcement, private sector housing renewal, noise and CCTV
- **Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure** covering arts, heritage, leisure centres, sports, libraries and adult learning.

The department's vision is to make Southwark's neighbourhoods great places to live, that are clean, safe and vibrant and where activities and opportunities are accessible to all. The department's approach to achieving savings follows the budget principles by focusing on core provision of quality services, efficiency savings, smarter procurement and robust contract management. The department is also seeking to increase income by raising demand for services.

All of the department's activities contribute towards all the Council's Fairer Future Promises and the objectives set out in the Council Plan, whether it be by delivering Free Swim and Gym, delivering A Greener Borough, making the borough a safer place, creating Quality Affordable Homes, contributing to health improvements or improving the environment for everyone in Southwark.

The department's activities mainly fall within the responsibilities of six Cabinet Members, and each of these receive briefings in relation to the budget proposals and performance against the Council Plan objectives.

The budget for environment and leisure services in 2014/15 is £72m. The department has already achieved savings of £5.5m during 2012/13, £2.6m during 2013/14 and is on target to achieve £2.3m savings for 2014/15. For 2015/16 it is proposed to make total savings of £5m (11%), including generating additional income of £2m.

It is proposed to make efficiency savings of £710k in Public Realm. This comprises £450k of efficiencies in winter maintenance, highways and gullies maintenance following increased capital investment and use of reserves, £180k from modernising

back office functions and harmonising staff terms & conditions, and £80k by introducing improved technology for contract supervision.

In Environmental Services, improved efficiency at the waste facility and a review of our clinical waste service provision will generate savings of £253k. Other efficiency savings include a divisional restructure and more effective use of agency staff. The division will generate electricity by installing large photovoltaic array on the roof of the council's waste management facility as an "invest to save" project. This will not only attract financial incentives from central government but also reduce the council's carbon footprint.

Community Safety & Enforcement division is proposing to make efficiency savings of £651k by restructuring and finding alternative funding for some of the existing posts. This includes phase 1 of review and rationalisation of all enforcement services saving £340k. Phase 2 will commence in 2016/17 with expectation of delivering further savings while maintaining the council's response to anti social behaviour and noise issues, and reducing the bureaucracy experienced by businesses.

It is proposed to make efficiency savings of £900k within the Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure division. These have been made possible through better management of the leisure management contract, a review of the libraries and heritage staffing structures to reflect technological changes and modernisation of heritage services within the new 151 Walworth Road building and by securing public health funding for community sports and well being services provided in libraries.

There are plans to generate additional income of some £2m for 2015/16. Public Realm and Environmental Services are proposing to generate £1m and £760k respectively from chargeable services whilst remaining in line with the London average. Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure will benefit from increased income at Kingswood House through better marketing and improved management of facilities which are also being upgraded through the capital programme. Community Safety's additional income of £100k will be generated from anticipated cost recovery from selective licensing activities, subject to consultations.

Budget commitments total £430k and are required for additional running costs for the new Camberwell Library, the start of an apprentice programme within our noise service and the pilot and implementation costs of our free swim and gym initiative.

In delivering these savings and income proposals, the department has sought to minimise any detrimental impact on service delivery. The budget proposals have been developed in line with the cabinet's budget principles, and they will deliver the best value for money possible whilst maximising the use of existing assets. The department's proposals are based on service need and demand with the aim of protecting front-line services and supporting the needs of our residents.

### **Environment and Leisure – Equalities Impact Summary**

The Environment and Leisure department offers and delivers a diverse range of services that shape the everyday experience of residents in the borough. Any savings proposals that may have a negative impact on the wider community or reduce the level of services offered have to be closely examined both in terms of community impact and the general duties of the Equality Act.

We have sought to do all we can to protect and offer continuity for front line operational services, especially where they have an impact on vulnerable residents. However, the

majority of our services are front line and changes and reductions to service delivery are inevitable in order to meet the scale of savings required. The proposals set out here seek to make savings and efficiencies through increased income generation, back office reductions, improved processes, leaner staffing structures and negotiating better value for money from our contractors.

An equality screening process has been completed on all the proposals to ensure that we have properly considered any impact there may be on specific groups and those with protected characteristics. Each of the 46 proposals have been risk assessed and four have been identified as having a potential equalities impact.

An equalities analysis has been carried out on these specific proposals to gauge the potential impacts, risks and mitigating controls that may be put in place to minimise any impact, and suitable recommendations have been made. The majority of these proposals have already been subject to extensive consultation with the community and partners prior to implementation, and further equalities assessments will need to be carried out once implementation and delivery plans are clarified.