

<b>Item No.</b> 10.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 13 March 2018	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Feedback from Southwark Conversation	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>Cabinet Members:</b>		Councillor Maisie Anderson, Public Health and Social Regeneration and Councillor Johnson Situ, Business, Culture and Social Regeneration	

**FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR MAISIE ANDERSON, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL REGENERATION AND COUNCILLOR JOHNSON SITU, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS, CULTURE AND SOCIAL REGENERATION**

In September 2017, Cabinet adopted the emerging Southwark Regeneration Framework. This piece of work sought to build on our commitment to invest in communities across the borough. The framework had three objectives: a borough wide approach to improving the wellbeing of current and future generations; a one Council approach to bring about improved well-being for people and places across Southwark; and wellbeing as a primary outcome of all our work. A key priority of the emerging framework was the need to hear from people who live, work or play in Southwark on their impression of change and the impact it has had on their lives.

Our ambition for the Southwark Conversation was to speak to residents, and the wider Southwark community, about how they perceive change in our borough - what was working for them, what they hoped to see more of as well as their fears and concerns about change in Southwark. In so doing we set ourselves the target of reaching more people than we've ever done before, crucially hearing from residents we traditionally don't hear from through our regular consultation programme.

We held a plethora of events across the borough, from baby and toddler sessions in local libraries to local meetings of faith organisations. No event was too small, no part of the borough without an opportunity to attend a local event. We used technology to hear from some of our borough's most digitally savvy but we also had a presence on street stalls and Christmas fairs.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the thousands of residents who took part in the exercise, and generously gave their time to talk to Councillors and Southwark staff about what matters to them and what makes a great place to live. The questions were wide-ranging and open so we hugely appreciate the careful thought that went into the responses. In this report we are now asking officers to spend more time undertaking detailed analysis of the findings in order that the future work of the Council can be informed and improved by the responses that we received.

Our initial findings first and foremost suggest that respondents liked the Southwark Conversation and found the format accessible and helpful. In addition, a significant majority of those who responded felt positive about change in our borough. Sense of

community, getting "out and about" and being connected shone through as themes raised by residents, pointing to what makes a good neighbourhood to live in and what can help with health and wellbeing. Other key themes that emerged include housing, safety of streets, cleanliness as well as the importance of employment opportunities and training.

Once further analysis of the findings has been completed - and the full richness of the information has been explored - the results of the Southwark Conversation will be a critically important tool for the design of the new council plan and service design across the Council.

Being connected to our residents and reflecting their needs, hopes and aspirations in all that we do has been a longstanding goal of this administration and we hope that the results of this engagement will allow us to further deepen this approach going forward.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the cabinet

1. Consider the initial findings from the Southwark Conversation, as set out in the report at Appendix 1;
2. Note and welcome the comprehensive response to the engagement exercise and thanks all those who participated in the Conversation for taking the time to provide their views and opinions;
3. Instruct officers to undertake further, more detailed analysis recognising the richness and diversity of the feedback with a particular focus on housing, community and public realm as the three top themes that people were most likely to mention when talking about change in the borough;
4. Note that the outcomes from analysis will support the development of a new Council Plan in the summer;
5. Following analysis, receive a final feedback report, including actions to be taken forward, in July 2018.

## **BACKGROUND**

6. In September 2017, the Cabinet received a report setting out a draft social regeneration policy framework and in doing so agreed a definition as "social regeneration is about ensuring that the places where people live, now and in the future, create new opportunities, promote wellbeing and reduce inequalities so people have better lives, in stronger communities and achieve their potential".
7. In agreeing this definition the Cabinet sought to more clearly define the council's approach to regeneration that works for all; an approach that primarily seeks to reduce economic and health inequalities and to strengthen communities. An approach that harnesses change to reduce inequalities in a borough where people are healthy and resilient, feel connected, and there are opportunities for all.
8. Cabinet also agreed that the draft social regeneration policy framework be further shaped and used as part of the evidence for a wider conversation with residents, partners and stakeholders and that a report be brought back on progress. This was known as "the Southwark Conversation". The Southwark

Conversation ran from 19 October up until 24 December 2017. It involved 109 separate events alongside receipt of 2,923 individual responses. In line with Cabinet's request, the report at Appendix 1 sets out the initial findings from this wide-ranging conversation exercise.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Social regeneration and the Southwark Conversation**

9. Southwark is developing a policy framework for social regeneration. In September 2017, Southwark's emerging policy framework on social regeneration proposed a number of starting objectives:
  - A borough wide approach to improving the wellbeing of current and future generations;
  - A one Council approach to ensure all our assets are used and aligned effectively to bring about improved well-being for people and places across Southwark;
  - Wellbeing as a primary outcome of all our work, whether in regeneration or across the broader work that we do together as a Southwark community.
10. The emerging framework put people at the heart of everything the council does, engaging with them in an ongoing process to identify priorities and co-design solutions. In developing the framework, the council wanted to gain a deeper understanding of what people think about social regeneration and wellbeing in the borough.
11. Fundamental to the social regeneration policy framework was the Southwark Conversation, which was about drawing from everyday conversations and experience in our shops, streets and schools and the places where people come together. It was about understanding what people across the borough think has worked well in recent times, what we as a council and community need to keep doing and do more of, as well as what may need to change in the light of the borough and world in which we live, both now and in future years.
12. The Southwark Conversation was therefore about involving as many people as possible who have stake in improving the well-being of those who visit the borough, work here and call Southwark their home.

### **Southwark Conversation – headline findings**

13. In summary, people generally liked the approach of the Southwark Conversation and welcomed it as a way to actively engage with a wide range of individuals, communities and groups across the borough. The headline finding was that 70% of respondents were positive, either in full or part, about change in the borough.
14. Feedback highlighted that “getting out and about”, “services and amenities” and “being connected” were the top three things that most people ranked as important to their health and wellbeing. When asked to specifically talk about what makes a place a ‘good neighbourhood’, almost 60% of people cited a sense of community as the biggest single determining factor for them.
15. Appendix 1 goes into detail across a number of common themes emerging from the Southwark Conversation. Themes included housing, cleanliness and safety

of streets, employment and training for young people and more generally the things that people like to do and want to see more of locally.

16. To be able to categorise and present the key findings of the data as set out in Appendix 1 a process commonly known as “data reduction” was deployed. The most systematic and commonly used method for doing this in qualitative research is for the researchers to read through the transcripts and develop categories or codes to represent the data. In other words when similar topics were encountered they were coded as belonging to a similar category. Taking this approach allowed the researchers to note the most commonly mentioned issues or views held by respondents.
17. There were a number of ‘issues’ that while mentioned by a significant number of respondents were not necessarily mentioned by the majority of respondents. As a result, it would be inappropriate to infer where this happened that the absence of a mention equates to a disagreement with the most commonly expressed views.

### **Southwark Conversation – what, when, who?**

18. The Southwark Conversation was launched by the Leader of the Council on 19 October 2017. It ran until 24 December 2017 and involved 109 separate events including community conversations, group discussions, public meetings and other community-led activities. The Conversation generated 2,923 individual responses, representing the largest borough wide response of its type and in line with aspiration set out by Cabinet in September 2017. By comparison, the next largest consultation exercise undertaken by the Council (on dogs) prior to the Southwark Conversation generated 2,081, some 842 responses fewer.
19. Alongside tried and tested methods of engaging with our residents the Conversation included more innovative ways of reaching under-represented groups. We know that young people are less likely to respond to council consultations so the Conversation targeted young people and other under represented groups through for example working with Rerezent Youth radio. Other methods included young people interviewing their peers in streets and open spaces across the borough.
20. Community groups across the borough were encouraged to lead conversations and council officers produced a toolkit for those with little or no experience of facilitating these kinds of discussions. Officers also commissioned a series of “talkaoke” events at different locations. The talking version of karaoke, talkaoke is a pop-up talk show consisting of an illuminated round table with a host sitting in the middle who facilitates the conversation with participants around the table.
21. Appendix 1 summarises the initial findings from the Conversation exercise alongside the demographic profile of respondents to the Southwark Conversation, comparing this with the general population of the borough to highlight the level of reach and representation of response. It sets out how Conversation responses and input were generated and gathered and who responded (e.g. whether in full online or by telephone or other means). It explains how responses and input was analysed by officers, in particular recognising the richness and complexity of the subjective nature of responses. It sets out what people told us and what people think, grouping the responses under a series of common themes. It also highlights how people say they could be more involved in the future of the borough.

22. Appendix 2 sets out further information on the engagement methodology deployed for the Southwark Conversation.

### **Next steps**

23. This report sets out the initial findings from the feedback arising from the Southwark Conversation. As set out in Appendix 2, the engagement methodology deployed for the Southwark Conversation included using wide and innovative techniques to ensure as broad a representative sample of views as possible. Given the richness and complexity of views, the analysis at this stage has focused on initial findings. Further, more detailed work is required to ensure that the analysis gives fuller understanding of what people told us, what they think and what they would like to see more (and less) of both now and for the future of the borough.
24. Officers will therefore undertake a further, more detailed stage of analysis over the coming months and report back on detailed findings in line with that analysis. This stage of analysis will be important in helping the Council to develop a new Council Plan in the summer of 2018 alongside further development of the outcome measure and indicators that make up the social regeneration policy framework. This will mean that the feedback from the Southwark Conversation will help directly shape priorities for the Council's plans, actions and resources over the medium term.

### **Community impact statement**

25. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
26. The Southwark Conversation, running from 19 October to 24 December 2017, was a conversation with communities about wellbeing and the future of the borough. The conversation drew on planned events in the council calendar, use of resident surveys, other community conversations as well as more innovative approaches to engagement.
27. The engagement plan was designed to be inclusive of all the borough's communities and provide a range of mechanisms to provide all residents with the opportunity to engage. In particular, a dual approach was taken to ensure the community engagement process was as representative as possible. This approach included a series of events designed specifically to encourage participation by groups of residents either traditionally underrepresented, or for whom traditional engagement events are hard to access. These events were promoted via community engagement contacts.
28. Groups and individuals that may not always be heard as often as others were a key focus and where particular groups were underrepresented activities were targeted to prioritise such groups, ensuring as wide a sample of representation as possible in the Conversation.

29. To ensure that the community conversations were accessible to all residents, survey respondents were asked to provide demographic information which could be compared with the demographic make-up of the population as a whole. This exercise demonstrates that the conversation is broadly representative of the population as a whole giving high levels of confidence that it represents what most people would be likely to say. The demographic profile of those participating in the Conversation is set out within the report at Appendix 1.

### **Policy implications**

30. This report sets out initial findings from the Southwark Conversation, as set out in Appendix 1. The feedback report explores local issues and potential solutions as suggested by local people and gives a sense of what people think of change in the borough. It is important that these findings should be triangulated with what we already know from other engagement, research, data analysis and understanding of the borough. As such in order to ensure the findings are set within the most appropriate context, they will need to be verified using other sources of information such as previous consultations and local data before identifying local implications or next steps.
31. The Southwark Conversation is the beginning of a co-production approach to social regeneration. The feedback will be used to shape the policy framework for social regeneration and with that influence council policies, projects and activities over the short and medium term. This will include development of a new Council Plan that will be worked up following the outcome of local elections in May 2018.

### **Resource implications**

32. There is no specific resource implication attached to reporting on the initial findings from the Southwark Conversation per se.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

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

33. This report asks cabinet to note the responses to the recent "Southwark Conversation" initiative, consider the findings and recommends that officers be instructed to undertake further work to analyse the feedback and provide and bring back a further report to Cabinet.
34. As the subject-matter of the report falls within more than one cabinet portfolio area, it is appropriate for the report to be brought to the full meeting of cabinet for consideration, in accordance with Part 3D of the council's constitution.
35. Local authorities in England were until 2015 subject to a requirement to produce a "sustainable community strategy" for promoting and improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. This accompanied a general power to do anything the council considered likely to achieve these objectives, which in 2012 was itself revoked, in relation to local authorities in England, and replaced by the "general power of competence" giving councils the power to do any thing that individuals generally may do. Councils also retain their subsidiary power under section 111 Local Government Act 1972 to do anything calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

36. In 2012 local authorities in England were made subject to a duty to take such steps as they considered appropriate to for improving the health of people in their areas (section 2A National Health Service Act 2006, as amended). “Wellbeing” is a feature of the council's definition of social regeneration (see paragraph 3 of the report) and a feature of its policy framework (see paragraph 5). Tithere report further describes the Southwark Conversation as fundamental to the development of the council's policy in this area, and can therefore be said to have facilitated, and/or is conducive or incidental to, the fulfilment of council's duty in this area.

37. Paragraph 24 of the report refers to the public sector equality duty in section 149 Equality Act 2010. This requires the council, in the exercise of all its functions, to have due regard to the need to

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The duty will apply throughout the development of the social regeneration policy framework.

38. That a decision maker must conscientiously take into account responses to response to a consultation before finalising any proposal is a fundamental principle of fairness and sound consultation, as enshrined by the Supreme Court decision in *R (Moseley) v Haringey London Borough Council* (2014).

**Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (FC17/079)**

39. The strategic director of finance and governance notes the recommendations in this report in respect of the Southwark Conversation. It is recommended that further more detailed analysis takes place to support the development of a new council plan in the summer. The costs of this more detailed work must be contained within existing budget provision. The costs of any projects arising from a new council plan will be identified at the time these are brought forward.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None.		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Conversation – initial findings (Southwark Council: London, 2018) – circulated separately
Appendix 2	Southwark Conversation – further explanation of engagement methodology – circulated separately
Appendix 3	Southwark Conversation – Guidance for Running a Group Discussion – circulated separately

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Members</b>	Councillor Maisie Anderson, Public Health and Social Regeneration Councillor Johnson Situ, Business, Culture and Social Regeneration	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Deborah Collins, Strategic Director of Environment and Social Regeneration Kevin Fenton, Director of Health and Wellbeing	
<b>Report Author</b>	Kevin Fenton, Director of Health and Wellbeing Stephen Gaskell, Head of Chief Executive's Office	
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<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
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