

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**

**(ORDINARY MEETING)**

**28 JANUARY 2020**

**MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR WILLIAM HOUNGBO**

Residents in many parts of Southwark have expressed concerns about safety because of ongoing issues with drug dealing in residential areas. The perception is that nothing is being done to stop it. Can the leader please outline what steps the council is taking, either unilaterally, or in partnership with the police and others, to address this problem?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Council and the police are committed to working in close partnership to tackle the serious issues of drug supply and use affecting our communities. Where reports of drug use are made to the council, we work in partnership with other organisations, including the police, council's Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Unit, and community wardens to tackle the issue. We also use CCTV, community engagement, and intelligence sharing with local police teams.

We can and do take enforcement action against those identified as being involved in drug supply. Currently, we are pursuing possession action against a number of households who have been prosecuted by the police. Injunctions and Criminal Behaviour Orders are also used to manage the behaviour of those engaged in drug abuse. In the last 12 months the Partnership Tasking group have looked at 27 different locations where drug related ASB has been reported and a partnership response has been required.

As well as enforcement, the council offers support to the most vulnerable members of the community who may be the victims of 'cuckooing' or exploitation by drug users. This may involve problem premises being closed down and vulnerable individuals rehoused into supported accommodation.

We know that the illegal drugs markets and serious and organised crime are two of the main drivers of community harm and exploitation. The council, police and partners are currently developing a multi-agency hub which will focus on our local approach to this issue. We are working closely with the London Violence Reduction Unit, neighbouring boroughs and neighbouring police forces. It is crucial that we ensure individuals and communities are supported and robust enforcement action is taken against perpetrators.

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR TOM FLYNN**

Will the leader join me in congratulating Helen Hayes, Harriet Harman and Neil Coyle on their re-election as Labour MPs for the borough?

## **RESPONSE**

I am very happy to join Councillor Flynn in congratulating our three fantastic Labour MPs on being returned to parliament.

Neil, Harriet and Helen fought phenomenal campaigns, rooted in our communities and on an avowedly pro-remain platform – which I was very proud to support.

It would be remiss of me, however, not to recognise that Labour performed less well in the rest of the country, with our worst set of election results since 1935.

As we continue through a period of reflection, I hope the party will look to the example set in Southwark where we base ourselves within our communities, listen to the concerns and aspirations of residents and reflect this in our work.

### **3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

How many council homes have been sold or demolished since 2010? What is the average time and cost for new council homes which have been built since then (from site identification to letting)?

## **RESPONSE**

During this period we have demolished, or released for demolition, 2,051 homes across the borough. These have been largely across major regeneration schemes such as the Elmington and the Aylesbury. Across these sites we are building more homes at social rents which will be available for people on our housing list.

A total of 1,804 council homes have been sold during this period, 85% of which were bought by residents through 'right to buy'. Right-to-Buy has eroded our council housing stock over consecutive decades, and given current planning policy, and land values, local authorities across the country have struggled to keep pace and replace all homes lost to right-to-buy.

However, with wide scale regeneration projects across the borough, we are replacing and improving the number and quality of council homes across Southwark, to provide families with safe, warm and dry homes for years to come.

At the end of 2019, 926 council homes were either delivered or on site, with a further 668 with planning approval and a further 2,305 in earlier stages of development.

Furthermore, we are looking to add an estimated 500 additional new homes to the pipeline through Individual Decisions by Cabinet Member (IDMs) by March 2020 for delivery by 2022.

Therefore, we are currently on track to meet and exceed our pledge to build 2,500 council homes by 2022, which is a significant step towards our commitment to build 11,000 new homes by 2043 – the largest council house building programme in the country.

The average cost of these homes is approximately £264,000, however we must acknowledge that building costs have been increasing rapidly in recent years and it is expected that Brexit will continue to worsen this situation. In terms of average delivery time, in 2012 it took around 4.5 years from Cabinet report to delivery of a scheme, but

we have been working hard to shorten this timeframe. At present, from IDM to a start on site is around two years and we are looking at further routes to quicken and expand our delivery.

This is reflected in the January 2020 New Housing Delivery Report from Concilio which showed that Southwark is the second highest builder of affordable homes in London.

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ELEANOR KERSLAKE**

Does the leader agree that timely access to GPs is essential for all Southwark residents, and that it is important that a GP practice stays at Maddock Way on the Brandon Estate?

**RESPONSE**

Timely access to high quality primary care is an important contributor to improving individuals' health and wellbeing, alongside community and societal efforts to improve their physical, mental, social and economic wellbeing. Southwark is committed to working with a range of partners to improve health and reduce health inequalities for all our residents and communities.

The current provision of GP services at Maddock Way on the Brandon estate is highly valued by local residents and has been a key contributor to the social fabric of the community. With the retirement of Dr Sinha, who has served for 43 years as a GP in the borough, work is now underway to identify alternative provision for the site. We would like to thank Dr Sinha for his service to the local community.

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has been working closely with Southwark Council officers, ward councillors, and the local community to understand their needs and to identify alternative GP service provision. Good progress has been made in identifying an interim solution which will be discussed at the CCG's Primary Care Commissioning Committee (PCCC) meeting to be held in public on Tuesday 28 January.

We will then continue to engage with residents on the Brandon Estate to discuss and identify additional medium and long term sustainable solutions for supporting the health and wellbeing of this community.

**5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR NICK JOHNSON**

The Canada Water Master Plan was approved despite clear issues with the overcrowding on the Jubilee Line as acknowledged in the council's own reports. What conversations have occurred between the council and British Land, and the council and Transport for London (TfL) since to ensure that overcrowding at Southwark's Jubilee Line stations is being addressed?

**RESPONSE**

The transport impacts of the Canada Water Masterplan were fully summarised in the officer's report to the Planning Committee in September 2019 and were the subject of extensive discussion at the meetings where representatives of TfL were present to answer questions.

The impacts are challenging but were considered, on balance, to be managed by the measures to be put in place through the s106 agreement.

The officer's report states: "At a strategic level, Transport for London has confirmed its view that all mitigation justified and required from BL (British Land) to satisfactorily accommodate the predicted growth has been secured in the s106 agreement."

Since the resolution of the Planning Committee to grant planning permission subject to the applicant entering into an appropriate legal agreement, officers have been meeting BL and TfL to discuss how the resolution of the Planning Committee should be put into place through the detailed drafting of the s.106 agreement.

It is intended that a detailed draft of the section 106 agreement will be provided for the Greater London Authority when the application is referred to the Mayor of London which is expected imminently.

**6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU**

Can the leader update us on the delivery of new council homes across the borough?

**RESPONSE**

At the end of 2019, 926 council homes were either delivered or on site, with a further 668 with planning approval and a further 2,305 in earlier stages of development.

Furthermore, we are looking to add an estimated 500 additional new homes to the pipeline through IDMs by March 2020 for delivery by 2022.

Therefore, we are currently on track to meet and exceed our pledge to build 2,500 council homes by 2022, which is a significant step towards our commitment to build 11,000 new homes by 2043 – the largest council house building programme in the country.

This is reflected in the January 2020 New Housing Delivery Report from Concilio which showed that Southwark is the second highest builder of affordable homes in London.

**7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

Please can the leader tell us how much money has been collected in the Carbon Offset Fund from developments that have failed to meet our Carbon Reduction targets? Can he also tell us what priorities are being used to decide how the money is spent, and when the planning committee can expect to receive the report on it so we can start spending it, as, despite the Leader's assurances at the July 2019 Council Assembly, it was not available to be considered by the planning committee in October 2019?

**RESPONSE**

In March 2019 we declared a climate emergency. We emphasised that we would bring together people from across the borough to achieve our ambitious goal of carbon neutrality by 2030. As part of this, we are continuing to enforce our Carbon Reduction targets on developments to ensure that everyone plays their part in tackling climate change.

As of 20 January 2020 the Carbon Offset Fund has received £978,391.47. So far with this fund we have developed projects worth £60,000 to replace lighting in common areas on five housing estates with much more carbon efficient low energy LEDs. We have identified this as an effective and achievable way of making a high level of carbon saving. We have also developed a proposal from this fund for £90,000 for a fuel poverty project, and additional projects are in the pipeline.

Since declaring our climate emergency we have been developing our strategy to become carbon neutral by 2030. We will be starting a period of extensive consultation with the community on our approach in March and the final version of the strategy will come to Cabinet in June 2020. The strategy will set out our approach to carbon offsetting and will help inform the council's work in the future.

The New Southwark Plan has also been updated to ensure that the Climate Emergency is being addressed in the strategic and more detailed policies. The policies are being reviewed to consider whether amendments can be prepared for the Autumn to provide more guidance and requirements for developments to address the Climate Emergency.

Further work will follow based on the emerging Climate Strategy to identify a range of other projects.

**8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE ROSE**

How does Southwark's recycling rate compare to other inner London boroughs?

**RESPONSE**

It is with great pride that I can confirm that Southwark has maintained the highest household waste recycling rate in inner London for the last five years, and has the fourteenth best recycling rate in the whole of London.

This year, our residents recycled 35.2 per cent of all household waste which is the highest full year recycling rate Southwark has ever achieved. This success is made even greater by the fact that Southwark has a much higher proportion of high density housing than the average borough, where the communal services provided tend to produce lower recycling performance. Further developments are under construction which will increase our recycling rate further.

This high performance has been made possible in part by the state of the art waste management facility giving us the technical capacity to recycle more; and a long term contract which includes targets for improving recycling performance.

The council continues to engage with its contractors, Veolia, to identify further projects and performance improvements to increase the recycling rate in future, and expects to continue improving at a time when many councils have actually seen a fall in their reported recycling rates. In the wake of the climate emergency, we continue to make Southwark a greener borough for future generations.

**9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR JANE SALMON**

Can the leader confirm how many redeployable cameras there are in the borough, how many there are per ward and whether there are plans to commission any additional cameras?

**RESPONSE**

The council currently has 18 redeployable cameras which play an important role in identifying crime, antisocial behaviour and fly tipping. Cameras are not deployed on a ward by ward basis but on priorities as they emerge.

The deployment of the cameras is determined by the multi agency partnership tasking group (PTG). The group reviews issues raised by police, officers, residents and councillors to design a co-ordinated approach.

Decision making for requests for deployable cameras is also supported with evidence provided by the council's analytical and business service unit. This provides the PTG with the best and most appropriate information to make decisions on camera deployment.

The council has increased the number of deployable cameras from 4 to 18 over the last two years and has recently invested £332k in the CCTV infrastructure. The current level of coverage allows the team to effectively deploy, monitor and act on evidence gathered. Cameras are monitored from Southwark Police Station 24/7.

**10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES**

Following the publication of the Southwark School Standards Report for 2018/19, can the leader tell us how Southwark's schools are performing compared to London and national averages?

**RESPONSE**

We are proud to see our pupils in Southwark's schools excel and perform brilliantly.

The Southwark School Standards report highlights the continued strong performance of schools in the borough which continue to perform well-above the national benchmarks.

There has been an increase in the number of schools judged as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted, with 93 per cent of Southwark schools reaching this standard.

At GCSE, the attainment and progress 8 scores for students exceeded the national and London averages.

Similarly, 79.6 per cent of A-Level exam entries were awarded A\* - C grades, with 26.7 per cent of students achieving the top A\*-A grades. This is the fourth year Southwark has been above the national average.

We have maintained or improved on our high standards at every key stage and continue to close the gap to London. On phonics we are at 84%, which is above national and on par with other London authorities. At key stage one, we are 3% off the

highest London target, 1% for writing and 2% for maths. At key stage 2 we are at 68% and London is at 69%.

This is our best performance yet and builds on the strong foundation of a decade of investment and support in our schools by a council deeply committed to education and opportunities for all our young people. These achievements in this report are a credit to the strong relationship between our head teachers, governors and the local authority.

**11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH MCCALLUM**

Can the leader confirm how many households in Southwark have been classed as homeless in each of the past 5 years, broken down by the number of rough sleepers, those in hostels or similar accommodation, and those in temporary accommodation? Can he also confirm, of those in hostels or similar accommodation, and those in temporary accommodation, how many are situated in Southwark and how many are situated outside the borough?

**RESPONSE**

Homelessness is a national crisis, worsening in many areas across London and the UK following a decade of austerity, stagnating pay, rising housing costs, the hostile environment and welfare cuts - including the benefit cap, universal credit, bedroom tax and the slashing of the local housing allowance. Government data for rough sleeping in England reveals a 94% increase nationally since 2013 and a 165% increase overall since 2010.

However, Southwark continues to act as a leader in homelessness prevention. In April 2019 we became only the second London borough to achieve the National Practitioner Support Service Gold Standard, which was based on our comprehensive homelessness strategy. The results of this can be seen in reducing numbers of rough sleepers this year so far compared with previous years.

In June 2019 we agreed a target to eliminate the use of all nightly rate temporary accommodation by 1 January 2021. As of end of November 2019, numbers have reduced by 38% since April. Once completely eliminated, nightly paid accommodation may be utilised from time to time for emergencies only, for example, residents fleeing domestic abuse or other similar emergencies.

The council has continued to pursue innovative solutions to prevent repeated homelessness. Southwark agreed a partnership with Beam, commencing August 2019, to launch a pioneering approach to helping homeless people get the training and support they need to access skilled jobs. Beam crowdfunds employment training for individual homeless people through its website. Southwark will provide 50 households as part of an initial pilot.

Tomorrow, our Cabinet Member with responsibility covering homelessness, Councillor Kieron Williams, will build on our work to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act by hosting a cross-departmental Homelessness Reduction and Prevention panel, alongside external agencies, to explore way in which we can improve our partnerships to support residents at risk of homelessness even further.

The figures relating to rough sleeping and temporary accommodation, over the course of the year, can be seen below:

Last years	5	Number of homeless rough sleepers
19/20*		195
18/19		435
17/18		309
16/17		318
15/16		372

Last years	5	Number of new homeless cases in the year placed in hostels (placed in Southwark)	Number of new homeless cases in the year placed in hostels (placed out of Southwark)
19/20**		359	0
18/19		451	0
17/18		567	0
16/17		534	0
15/16		845	0

Last years	5	Number of new homeless cases in the year placed in other forms of temporary accommodation (placed in Southwark)	Number of new homeless cases in the year placed in other forms of temporary accommodation (placed out of Southwark)	Total number of new homeless cases in the year placed in other forms of temporary accommodation
19/20**		645	1154	1799
18/19		809	1458	2267
17/18		1082	1521	2603
16/17		1015	1330	2345
15/16		1103	1134	2237

\*(year to date) as at the end of September 2019. Source: CHAIN data (GLA) – data.london.gov.uk

\*\* (year to date) as at the end of November 2019, latest available, verified data. Source: Internal system data.

### Total Homeless Acceptances

Year	Total
2015/16	994
2016/17	1086
2017/18	588
2018/19	738
2019/20	793

**12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE**

Can the leader please outline where in Southwark the council has installed Motorcycle Anchors to prevent motorcycle theft? Can he also detail any plans to install more Motorcycle Anchor points, especially on Southwark's housing estates, and set out what additional work is being done by the council and its partners to prevent the theft of motorcycles from delivery drivers, students, workers, and other local residents?

**RESPONSE**

We are committed to tackling all forms of crime in Southwark and motorcycle theft is no different. To ensure that we are protecting our residents in the most effective way, a motorcycle anchor trial was undertaken on Tanner Street and Storks Road to assess their suitability.

This and a further consultation demonstrated under use and that respondents generally preferred railings to anchors. Therefore a programme of installing motorcycle railings was introduced last year. Since then, we have installed nine railings on existing motorcycle bays in Borough and Bankside (3), Camberwell Green (2), Faraday (1), North Bermondsey (2) and St Giles (1). We have also installed a new motorcycle bay and a new railing in Goose Green, and will install one each in Borough and Bankside and St George's this year.

We continue to investigate new suitable locations for secure motorcycle parking whether they are from resident's requests for additional bays or identifying motorcycle crime hotspots through motorcycle theft data. We also continue to work closely with the police in local hot spots by supporting theft reduction initiatives, such as temporary signage and 'lock it or lose it' messaging.

We have also taken specific motorcycle anti-theft measures on our estates. Since 2015, Addy House, Hawkstone Estate, Lordship Lane Estate, Rother House, Rouel Road, Rye Hill Estate, Stevens Street, Trent House and Wyndham Estate have been equipped with a range of motorcycle anti-theft measures. Herne Hill Estate is also currently under consultation for the provision of a Cleaner Greener Safer funded anti-theft stand and railing.

**13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL**

Given Southwark's "Digital by Default" approach, can the leader outline what the council is doing to ensure that people without internet access or with restricted mobility, particularly older people, are not excluded from accessing services and support?

**RESPONSE**

While the council is keen to expand and improve our digital offer to residents, making it quicker and easier to engage with our services online, we fully recognise that there are residents for whom online services may be neither possible or appropriate. To this end there are a number of alternative routes we provide in order to avoid digital exclusion.

### **Access via our Contact Centre**

Last year the council received circa 600,000 telephone calls into our contact centre and saw 23,878 numbers of people via our face to face services. A further 18,251 customers have used “assisted self service” provided within the front facing service area.

The main contact centre continues to provide front line access to a large number of residents for a wide range of our service. The contact centre is open 9-5 for all services and 24/7/365 for emergencies.

If an enquiry is of a complex nature the customer may be advised to attend one of the Service Points.

### **Access via our Service Point**

The Peckham Service Point redesign has offered 10 self service terminals with telephones plus a further four telephones available to support those who have difficulties in using our on-line services. Three desks are located on the ground floor along with a reception desk to assist residents and those unable to access our online bookings systems.

The Peckham customer service point is a bus ride away from any part of the borough. The Customer Services Officers based at Peckham predominantly support customer self service, conduct appointments with customers with complex issues and/or with those who are vulnerable.

The smaller Aylesbury Service Point also continues to assist customers with their enquiries, honouring the council’s commitment to maintain a customer services presence on the Aylesbury whilst regeneration is taking place. The service offers appointments to all customers who need support with submitting documents and resolving complex issues within the regeneration scheme.

### **Libraries**

In addition, assisted self service points are located in all libraries. The library service currently deliver digital taster sessions for customers who require essential and basic IT skills and knowledge. For example, using a keyboard and mouse and creating email accounts etc. In addition, it has been agreed that the library service will now include a module to assist individuals in accessing services and information via MySouthwark.

The Service Point team work closely with colleagues in the library services and have trained library staff to roll out the digital support to customers.

Southwark has a network of 12 libraries with excellent geographical coverage from Borough High Street in the North to Kingswood House in the South. There is a range of opening hours with four libraries open on Sundays ensuring seven day access to services. All libraries provide free access to the internet through a network of fixed computers at each library and the availability of Wi-Fi.

The service contributes to the council priorities and Fairer Future promises to improve digital access to services and “Digital by Default” by providing basic ICT training session for the public. Last year 5,174 ICT training sessions were run in libraries.

In addition to the basic introduction session, library staff also assists residents with more specific online tasks such as applying for freedom passes.

It is a natural extension of this provision for libraries to support residents to access council services online by assisting them in registering for “My Southwark” and helping them with basic enquiries about the range of services available.

### **High Speed community Internet**

The council has secured investment by telecommunication providers, Community Fibre and Hyperoptic, to support digital inclusion support to residents including providing free fast connections to community hall and libraries.

As part of the digital inclusion support:

- Residents are being encouraged to volunteer to become digital champions. Training is provided so they are equipped to give neighbours who need support in accessing services online.
- Events at community halls are being held to encourage “silver surfers” - older residents – to give them confidence in using the internet and digital services.
- Residents who have limited mobility are receiving support from a recognised organisation, who visit their homes and provide training so they can access online services.

#### **14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES**

Can the leader of the council provide an update on the cabinet’s commitment made in December 2016 to resettle twenty five Syrian refugee households by 2021, with the ambition to rehouse five Syrian refugee households a year for the next five years between 2017-2021?

#### **RESPONSE**

In 2016 the council with the Salvation Army and Citizens UK developed a collaborative proposal to use accommodation at the William Booth college site as a resettlement scheme. The first three families from Syria were welcomed to the William Booth site in June 2018.

A full resettlement plan was implemented, involving arranging applications for benefits, health assessments, referrals for employment support, registering with local GPs and dentists and supporting admissions to schools. In March 2019, Southwark welcomed its fourth family, again through its partnership with the Salvation Army. All four families are now in private sector properties in Southwark, as the Salvation Army has begun redevelopment of William Booth College. The council has also provided support to Peckham Sponsors Refugees, a community sponsorship scheme that resettled an extended refugee family into the borough taking the number of families to five.

The families are identified by central government through the Syrian Voluntary Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) that plans to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees from refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt and Turkey.

In the programme, central government works with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to identify the people that they deem in need of

resettlement. The UNHCR have developed criteria to identify those most in need of support that are applied to determine who would benefit most from assistance.

The people coming to the UK under the VPRS are in desperate need of assistance and many have significant needs. It prioritises those who cannot be supported effectively in their region of origin: women and children at risk, people in severe need of medical care and survivors of torture and violence amongst others.

Under the scheme, central government sets the criteria and then UNHCR identifies and submits potential cases for central government consideration. Cases are screened and considered by us and we retain the right to reject on security, war crimes or other grounds.

Once the screening process has been completed a full medical assessment is conducted by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in the host country. Full details of the case and medical history are sent to the local authority for assessment of need once suitable accommodation is identified locally and the Home Office have been notified of available property.

The council is continuing its search for suitable private sector rented properties to be used for the resettlement programme. Whilst there is high demand for affordable properties across the borough, the council is committed to meeting its target of resettling a further 20 households into the borough. We are actively working with private sector landlords to identify further properties for the programme.

**15. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN**

Since the loss of XXL, Southwark's last remaining LGBTQ+ club, can the cabinet member please outline what the council is doing to support and promote LGBTQ+ nightlife in the borough?

**RESPONSE**

The council will continue to support LGBTQ+ venues which contribute to the vibrancy of our borough. We listened to the concerns of the community following the closure of XXL and introduced amendments to community and leisure policies to strengthen the requirements to consider the needs of LGBTQ+ communities.

An equalities assessment is now required to consider the impacts of development on the different communities that may be affected. Furthermore, a Development Consultation Charter has been introduced to measure and test these impacts before the planning application is submitted in addition to during and after the development process.

Specifically, the council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the developers of Bankside Yards that part of the space formerly occupied by Pulse nightclub will be reserved for an LGBTQ+ occupier. An open and transparent process will be undertaken at the appropriate time to identify an occupier who will provide a safe and inclusive place to meet and socialise, promoting cultural and wellbeing activities and providing support and advice to the most vulnerable members of the community.

More broadly, the council's outdoor events policy sets out that outdoor events in Southwark must positively contribute to celebrating diversity and create a strong sense

of community and community cohesion, contributing to a vibrant culture, environment and economy. The policy is the guiding principle for all outdoor events in Southwark and provides a framework which all event organisers must work within and adhere to. It forms part of a binding contract for event organisers wishing to use Southwark as a location to host their event.

The policy is also clear that the council seeks to maintain its existing high levels of community cohesion, promotion of equalities and maintenance of public order. Any event or activity which promotes messages of hate and intolerance will not be considered.

**16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR HUMAIRA ALI**

In July 2019 council assembly passed a cross-party motion on Promoting Equality and Valuing Diversity, in which we called on cabinet to, among other things, actively ensure that activities and events in Southwark acknowledge and reflect the diversity of life and society in our borough, establish a Civic Award honouring those who have made an outstanding contribution to making Southwark a more integrated, plural and tolerant place for us all and launch an updated equality and diversity standard for Southwark Council. Can the cabinet member outline when members can expect to see a plan which translates these ambitions into action? Can she also explain why those members who worked together to draft this motion have not been directly consulted or briefed on plans to amalgamate the role of diversity champions with that of community champions, a move which entirely misses the point of establishing these as key roles in Southwark with their own agreed purpose and objectives?

**RESPONSE**

We were proud to see the motion on promoting diversity and tackling hate crime, drafted collaboratively as a cross-party motion, agreed by all Southwark councillors. This demonstrates our borough's commitment to being welcoming and inclusive and sends a clear message that we have no tolerance for hate crime.

As was recognised in the Council Assembly motion, the council has included in its Council Plan a zero-tolerance commitment in relation to hate-crime in the borough, and has undertaken a range of positive delivery in this area in recent years.

Since March 2017, for example, the council has promoted and taken part in *National Hate Crime Awareness Week*, reaching more than 200 local residents, council staff, and commuters annually through stalls and other outreach activities. Promotional materials and resources have been provided to more than 50 community, voluntary, and faith groups across the borough, in addition to council offices and libraries.

More than 1,400 young people across more than 30 primary and secondary schools have been engaged with the awareness week through positive workshops which promoted diversity, tolerance, and equalities, and tackled the dangers of prejudice. We also funded the trial of interactive *Hate Crime* awareness-raising workshops across ten local primary schools, reaching 813 primary-age young people and secured fully-funded access to the *Free to Be* programme (focused on tackling anti-LGBT bullying and hate) for four Southwark primary schools.

The council's outdoor events policy sets out that outdoor events in Southwark must positively contribute to celebrating diversity and create a strong sense of community and community cohesion, contributing to a vibrant culture, environment and economy.

The policy is the guiding principle for all outdoor events in Southwark and provides a framework which all event organisers must work within and adhere to. It forms part of a binding contract for event organisers wishing to use Southwark as a location to host their event. The policy is also clear that the council seeks to maintain its existing high levels of community cohesion, promotion of equalities and maintenance of public order. Any event or activity which promotes messages of hate and intolerance will not be considered.

On working with schools, the Southwark Prevent team already deliver supportive work to more than 95 schools and colleges across as part of their commitment to countering extremism, radicalisation and hatred. This included the delivery of project sessions on promoting diversity and tackling prejudice. We have reached over 1,400 young people so far and plans for further work are included in the proposed local action plan. The Education Service continues to work to support Southwark schools in celebrating diversity and providing inclusive environments for children and young people.

The Council Assembly motion included a specific recommendation on establishing diversity champions, drawn on a cross-party or non-party basis, to act as additional focal points for enabling greater integration and strengthening community bonds of belonging, solidarity, tolerance and mutual support.

A number of options have been discussed with regards to creating new diversity champions, none of which have been formally decided. Going forward, we will be working with those councillors involved in the drafting of the original motion, to determine their thoughts on what form this role should take and how diversity champions will achieve the aims set out in the motion.

We are currently reviewing and updating our diversity standard that will reflect the good work completed over the last two years and embed the council's commitment to diversity in our ways of working. We anticipate that the draft standard will be completed in the spring. The new standard will be supported by the development of an equality framework which will set out how the council will ensure it is meeting the new diversity standard. The Equality Framework will be brought to Cabinet in summer 2020.

With regards to the Civic Awards, it has been agreed that the next cycle of annual Civic Awards will more explicitly incorporate a focus on those who have contributed to making Southwark a more integrated, plural and tolerant place. We will also consult with those councillors involved in drafting the original motion as to whether there is scope for a specific civic award to recognise those that promote diversity within Southwark.

The council will also continue to support LGBTQ+ venues which contribute to the vibrancy of our borough. We listened to the concerns of the community following the closure of XXL and introduced amendments to community and leisure policies to strengthen the requirements to consider the needs of LGBTQ+ communities.

An equalities assessment is now required to consider the impacts of development on the different communities that may be affected. Furthermore, a Development Consultation Charter has been introduced to measure and test these impacts before the planning application is submitted in addition to during and after the development process.

These actions contribute to making Southwark a borough that stands out for its integration, tolerance and mutual cross-community support, which can serve as a model for others to follow.

**17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR JASON OCHERE**

How successful was the free swimming lessons pilot?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Council is committed to making it easier for non-swimmers to get the confidence they need to enjoy the water through piloting free swimming lessons.

The swimming lesson pilot, which took place during Autumn 2019, was a resounding success, providing 364 lesson places in total. This included 180 places for over 60s, 44 places for adults with a disability or sensory impairment and 140 places for adults 16-59 years.

83% of places were booked on for the adults over 60 lessons, 98% of places were filled for the adults with a disability lessons, and all of the adult 16-59 year places were fully booked at Peckham Pulse.

The marketing to promote the lessons generated significant interest, with close to 2,000 people applying during August and September.

Following the successful pilot, on 13 January we launched the full adult swimming lesson offer across the leisure centres, with each venue hosting adult 16-59 year classes, adult 16yrs+ Disability/Sensory impairment lessons, and over 60s lessons. There are 590 swimming lesson places available in total, and we have currently filled 74% of places for these sessions.

**18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR ALICE MACDONALD**

Can the cabinet member tell us what progress has been made on promoting diversity and tackling hate crime since the motion on this subject was unanimously passed at the last council assembly meeting?

**RESPONSE**

I refer you to my answer to question 16.

**19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR DARREN MERRILL**

Can the cabinet member tell us when the first of Southwark's children will get their free theatre visits?

**RESPONSE**

Last March, Cabinet pledged £500,000 to implement a programme to ensure every primary child aged between five and eleven gets a free visit to the theatre every year.

Alongside Shakespeare's Globe sit small experimental theatres in the heart of our diverse communities such as Blue Elephant and Theatre Peckham and brand new contemporary performance spaces such as The Bridge. We want to support Southwark's theatres existing work and encourage development of a meaningful programme that facilitates a legacy of on-going relationships with schools.

In September 2019, following an open procurement process, Eastside were appointed as the service provider. Eastside will commission and secure tickets for appropriate theatre productions and connect schools with these opportunities. Relationships with schools will be managed via direct engagement and a digital one stop shop for schools to access free tickets.

We are working collaboratively with Eastside to commission theatre venues and companies to deliver the visits. The programme, named 'Raise the Curtain', will formally launch in April 2020.

A small number of early visits to trial the programme delivery model began in January 2020, the first being a successful visit to The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe at Bridge Theatre on 22 January 2020.

**20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

Now that the council have recognised the depth of feeling in the community about holding a ceremony at West Lane War Memorial on Armistice Day on 11 November, will the cabinet member make a commitment to continue doing so in future years?

**RESPONSE**

Following the centenary of the 1918 Armistice, the government issued guidance to local authorities recommending that commemorations should cease for any conflict that ended more than 100 years ago. This advice related to Armistice Day on 11 November, not to Remembrance Sunday which commemorates the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian servicemen and women in the two World Wars and later conflicts.

While this advice was accepted across other London boroughs, given the strength of feeling amongst residents in 2019, Southwark Council made the decision to support the outstanding efforts of volunteers who came forward to ensure this important community event would continue.

In future we will continue to lay wreaths and support Armistice Day events across the borough, including West Lane, in honour of our service men and women who sacrifice their lives in order to keep our country and its people safe.

**21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR MARGY NEWENS**

In light of the climate emergency, what is the cabinet member doing to demonstrate Southwark's commitment to biodiversity?

**RESPONSE**

On 17 December 2019, cabinet approved the new Biodiversity Action Plan called the 'Southwark Nature Action Plan 2020 - 2025' (SNAP) which sets out our continued commitment for biodiversity in Southwark.

At the heart of this plan is the Council Plan commitment to 'Protect Biodiversity and Make Nature Accessible for All'. We will be producing a young SNAP and a Cultural SNAP over the coming months to reach a wider audience on the subject.

Our second biodiversity action plan (Making space for natural neighbours 2013 -2019), delivered 59 of the 61 actions within the plan.

We continue to seek biodiversity net gain through the planning process. We have sought biodiverse roofs, Green walls, native planting, and nesting and roosting features in all major developments.

We have continued to improve and manage our parks and open spaces for nature and are now pleased that the Great Estates Programme includes greening of housing estates. Some examples are that we continue to create new wildflower meadows and introduce planting for pollinators. Dead wood from the tree management is reused for loggeries supporting the stag beetle.

We have negotiated 4 year management agreements in 2019 with our third sector partners; The London Wildlife Trust, The Conservation Volunteers and Bankside Open Spaces Trust. This allows us to maintain and warden some of our Local Nature Reserves and provide community engagement and volunteering opportunities for all.

Volunteering contributes around 25,000 hours in our parks and open spaces annually and helps us conserve and enhance important habitats.

We have increased the number of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) in positive management (a site in positive management has a management plan or has had conservation work delivered on the site) from 83% to 86%. Southwark has been in the top 10 English councils for SINC sites in positive management since monitoring of this national indicator began.

**22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR JACK BUCK**

Will the cabinet member commit to a) investing in Southwark's existing libraries, and b) opening new libraries in Southwark?

**RESPONSE**

We are continuing to invest in our libraries, recognising the value they provide as community hubs. The new Grove Vale library was completed at the end of 2018 and has seen a 66% increase in visitor numbers over the last year. During 2020, there will be improvement works taking place at Peckham library to replace heating and lighting and full redecoration of the library. A new heating system will also be installed at Nunhead library.

The positive impact of our commitment to investing in libraries is reflected in the latest annual benchmarking analysis. The comparators for 2018/19 show we have the highest level of capital expenditure on libraries in London, Canada Water Library achieved the third highest number of loans of any individual library in London and Southwark was the fourth most visited library service in London.

Two new libraries are being planned for Southwark over the next two years, during a period in which other boroughs are closing these community assets. The Walworth

Library and Southwark Heritage centre on the Walworth Road will replace the old Newington library and Cuming museum. We anticipate the centre opening in summer 2020

The new facility will include a full range of library services and a diverse events programme for adults and children. The heritage space will encompass a permanent collection showcasing the Story of Southwark and a temporary exhibition space featuring a rolling programme of displays showcasing objects and artefacts from the Cuming collection.

A new library is also planned as part of the development of the Aylesbury estate capital programme. The new library will replace East Street library and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021. The main library space will be 412 square metres, significantly larger than the existing East Street library space.

**23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND BREXIT FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LEEMING**

Can the cabinet member tell us how the council is preparing for the UK's exit from the EU on 31 January 2020 and the subsequent transition period?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark will always be on the side of its residents. No more so than during what will be challenging times ahead as the country embarks on its exit from a trading bloc and community that we as a borough have embraced over the last 47 years. Whatever the government plan by way of future arrangements with our European friends, the council will do everything it can to make sure our borough remains a welcoming and safe place, no matter your background.

A progress report setting out how the council is preparing for the country's exit from the EU at the end of the month, and its impact on Southwark, went to Cabinet on 21 January. This included a risk register, which has been under regular review over the last year. This is overseen by me as Cabinet lead with senior officer leads in place across all council services to prepare and plan, as we would for any major change.

Crucially our priority is on people's jobs, businesses and the communities in which they live. We therefore continue to engage with our local communities to discuss what further work may be required in supporting harder to reach and more vulnerable groups and individuals who may be disproportionately affected as a result of Brexit impact. The council will continue this dialogue and stands ready to make money available through the funding set aside last year for dealing with the impacts of Brexit.

From the outset of this long process of EU withdrawal by the government, the council has continually prioritised communicating clearly with our residents, often despite mixed and confusing messages from government. Our priority has and remains focused on ensuring our EU residents and our staff know they are welcome and that we want them to stay in our communities making their difference to our diverse borough. Over the last year and more we have used all the council's channels including social media, Southwark Life magazine, local advertising and our website to help increase awareness and share what information we have. Our EU settled status web page received 50,000 page views, and we saw strong take up of the registrar's free EU settled status support service. This support and communications will continue and be further stepped up as we move into the transition period for the country in the year ahead.

The number of Southwark residents who had applied for EU settled status has almost doubled, with the number increasing from 12,680 to 23,620 between June and November 2019 (later statistics are not yet released by the government). We estimate there are 41,000 EU citizens in Southwark and our proportion of those registered is similar to other London boroughs. We will continue to support those residents affected to get all the information they need so they can apply and get on with living their lives. We know that under-18s and over-65s are under-represented in current applications and so our updated communications plan reflects this. Over the next few months we will communicate messages via our channels, go out to our communities with targeted support and advice, and work with our partners in the voluntary sector and community to ensure we do all we can to make it as easy as possible for people to apply for settled status.

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that we now know the UK will exit the EU on 31 January. However, as a result of the passing of the Withdrawal Bill, a no deal exit on 31 January is unlikely and as a result, the government's Operation Yellowhammer arrangements have been stood down. This means that as we get to and move just beyond 31 January - and subject to the government working to the current withdrawal deal - our communities will see little immediate impact in that many current regulations and procedures will remain as is.

There will then commence an 11 month transition period. The purpose of the transition is to enable negotiations to take place by government to determine what the future relationship will look like between the UK and the EU, including agreement of a future trade deal. As the country enters the transition period, Southwark will continue to campaign tirelessly for a Brexit that does not negatively impact our local communities. Our planning will focus both on the immediate months ahead and also increasingly the medium to longer term. Key areas for us will include:

- Preserving the rights of EU nationals living and working in Southwark
- Avoiding a 'no deal' Brexit at the end of 2020 and ensuring a trading relationship with the EU that does not negatively impact Southwark businesses
- Greater clarity on funding arrangements for local government post-Brexit and specifically on the proposed Shared Prosperity Fund and what that means for communities in London and Southwark
- Ensuring local government views are taken into account at all levels of government in the review of relevant EU laws, for example on procurement and work place rights
- Exploring opportunities to bring more powers back to the local level, for example to ensure the provision of the skills needed in our local economy match the requirements of a post-Brexit London.

I remain confident that the borough will stand together as the country moves beyond its membership with the EU into new and different times and I welcome the next conversation and work with the cross-party Brexit panel on 4 February where we will further consider the council's role in ensuring our many and diverse communities continue to feel welcome, wanted and at home in Southwark.

**24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND BREXIT FROM COUNCILLOR LEANNE WERNER**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the outcomes of the multi-agency operation, led by the Metropolitan Police Service, that recently raided a number of nail bars in Southwark?

## **RESPONSE**

During 2019, Southwark's licensing and trading standards teams undertook work to enforce the licensing of nail bars in Southwark. This is part of our regular programme of work to ensure consumers are kept safe and staff are being properly protected in the workplace.

During visits to several unlicensed nail bars the council uncovered indicators for serious criminality, modern slavery and possible trafficking of vulnerable women and children.

The council subsequently worked jointly with the police and the Gang Masters and Labour Abuse Authority, as well as other agencies to gather further evidence both in terms of the conditions in the premises, but more acutely the appalling work practices and apparent levels of exploitation.

This team unearthed a number of extremely concerning issues which further indicated serious criminality. These again included possible modern slavery and trafficking, and acute issues around the safeguarding of adults and children. The matters were referred to the Central Specialist Crime Unit (SPU).

The above resulted in a joint council/police operation led by the SPU. The operation took place on 5 December 2019. This operation targeted five premises that were of particular concern. Our primary concern throughout was the safety of women, children and vulnerable adults caught up in this trade and a key feature of a operation was the setting up of a care centre to provide support, advice and guidance. Social care and support staff, specialist Vietnamese charities and the Salvation Army were all on hand to offer help and support.

From the five premises, 24 vulnerable adults and children were identified and taken to the established place of safety. Modern day slavery investigations have been opened for all these. Thirteen arrests were made in connection with the modern day slavery investigation and more arrests followed the operation. In addition to the modern slavery issues a vast amount of counterfeit goods were recovered. The police continue to work through what is an ongoing and complex criminal investigation.

### **25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND BREXIT FROM COUNCILLOR MAGGIE BROWNING**

Can the cabinet member update us on the latest divestment from fossil fuels in Southwark's pension fund?

## **RESPONSE**

In December 2016, Southwark Council pension fund made a landmark commitment. Following more than a year of consultation, deliberation and work with community groups we announced a decision to divest our £1.7bn fund from fossil fuels.

As well as part of our commitment to tackle the climate emergency, we also believe that climate change and holding significant investment in fossil fuels present a long term financial risk to our fund. We are clear that our action to reduce the carbon exposure of our fund is wholly consistent with our duties as pension fund trustees.

The roadmap to meet this commitment was incorporated into our updated Pensions Investment Strategy Statement, which was published in 2017. Despite the 'short term' goals in this statement being over a four year period (up to 2021) we have now completed all of them. We have already:

- Undertaken a comprehensive carbon foot printing review of all assets in the fund (Jan 2018)
- Transferred £150m equities into a specific low carbon investment fund (January 2018)
- Transferred a further £150m equities into a specific low carbon investment fund (March 2018)
- Agreed a target of 5% of the fund to be allocated to sustainable infrastructure and subsequently committed £30m to a Glenmont European Renewable Energy Fund (March 2018)
- Transferred a further £150m equities into the specific low carbon investment fund (January 2019)
- Agreed the transfer of £150m into a new fossil fuel exclusionary equity investment (March 2019)

Once this latest transfer is complete, the fund will have transferred £600m into low carbon or fossil fuel free funds. This is equal to 100% of our developed market equities in the Fund invested with low carbon or fossil fuel free

We have also now committed to two further renewable energy funds, £30m for Temporis Operational Renewable Power Strategy and £35m for Blackrock Global Renewable Power Fund III.

This investment will achieve the Fund's 5% target for sustainable infrastructure. This was finalised in July 2019.

The Fund's carbon footprint will be reassessed as part of our investment strategy review during the first quarter of 2020 and we estimate that we will have achieved a 55% reduction in carbon exposure.

All the action taken to date was part of the Fund's initial approach to reduce the significant risk to the Fund from climate change and fossil fuels, agreed in 2017.

I am delighted to announce that in recent days we have also made further progress with an initial proposal for the full divestment from all fossil fuel holdings from our £200m active equity mandate, to take place no later than the end of this calendar year. I am also incredibly pleased that will also include the divestment from all directly held tobacco stocks.

In March 2020 the Fund will be producing a revised investment strategy statement as part of our ongoing investment strategy review. At this point we will be presenting a refresh of our long term plans for divestment to cover the next stage of our approach to divesting from fossil fuels and investing in low carbon alternatives.

We believe that our approach to divestment will improve investment performance and reduce risk, net of costs or fees. Indeed over the last 12 months our low carbon investments have increased investment returns for the Fund.

**26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND BREXIT FROM COUNCILLOR PETER BABUDU**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on plans for a borough-wide private rented sector licensing scheme?

**RESPONSE**

We currently operate three licensing schemes in the private rented sector. These includes a borough-wide mandatory scheme for larger Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs), a borough-wide discretionary scheme for remaining HMOs, and a further discretionary selective licensing scheme that applies to single family homes in the private rented sector in areas which were prioritised as having the greatest need.

The HMO schemes apply to all HMOs within the borough, which equates to 5,031 properties. The selective scheme applies to approximately 3,000 single family homes.

The council has spent the last 18 months developing the required evidence base to renew the schemes and to expand the private rented sector scheme to cover the majority of the borough. It is our intention that the new schemes will cover nearly 37,000 private rented sector (PRS) homes. It is now the council's intention to begin the consultation on our intentions in the spring following Cabinet approval.

This will be a full public consultation with all stakeholders, including our residents, the council, neighbouring local authorities and external agencies with an interest in the private rented sector. It will be accompanied by a publicity campaign, and include meetings and events to reflect the importance and scale of the proposals. Following the consultation, a report will be brought to Cabinet with the results of the consultation and final proposals for the schemes.

It is highly likely that an application for approval from the Secretary of State at Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will be required for the final proposed schemes. At this stage we estimate that, subject to the consultation and Secretary of State approval, that the new schemes will be implemented in early 2021.

**27. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY FROM COUNCILLOR DAMIAN O'BRIEN**

In the cabinet member's report to cabinet dated 29 October 2019, paragraph 3, he states "the council will significantly extend coverage of the Santander Cycle Hire scheme in the borough." However, in Appendix C of the same document, the only secured docking stations sites indicated north of Southwark Park Road are funded either by Transport for London (TfL) along the Cycleway 4 corridor or by British Land's S106 agreement to provide 6 docking stations. Secured sites to the south are also marked as being financed by 'developer funding'. Can the cabinet member please therefore explain why there is no indication of any Southwark Council investment in additional docking stations, despite ongoing campaigns from local Liberal Democrats councillors for this much-needed infrastructure? Can he also explain the apparent contradiction between his claim that "the council will significantly extend the ... scheme" and this lack of investment?

**RESPONSE**

I am delighted that the Cabinet has agreed a strategy for extending Transport for London's Santander docked cycle scheme to cover most of the borough. Implementing

this strategy will have a number of phases that will be delivered as resources become available.

The council has successfully lobbied TfL for the expansion along Cycleway 4 and secured further investment in cycle hire through the Canada Water Masterplan planning application. This will achieve the first objective within the strategy of extending it beyond the current small area in and around the congestion charge zone to stretch across the entire east-west breadth of the borough in its north. This is therefore achieving a significant part of the expansion that both Labour and Liberal Democrat councillors have been calling for.

The paper referred to then sets out the strategy for building on these recent agreed expansions and details how the cycle hire scheme could practically be expanded south. This will actively seek opportunities through developments and TfL-funded projects to do so and will identify council resources to fund the remaining elements of the strategy.

The council maintains ongoing discussions with third parties to ensure that changes capture the ambition to expand the docked cycle hire scheme. The strategy and identification of future sites supports these discussions and the consideration of cycle hire docking stations when changes are proposed.

**28. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY FROM COUNCILLOR DAN WHITEHEAD**

In July 2019 council assembly passed a motion condemning Transport for London's (TfL) decision to "pause" progress on the delivery of the Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf walking and cycling bridge, and calling on cabinet to continue to lobby TfL and to meet with Heidi Alexander in support of the bridge, and to address other major transport infrastructure commitments affecting Southwark, including the Santander Bicycle Hire extension and the Silvertown Tunnel. Could the cabinet member please outline what progress has been made in relation to these commitments?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark councillors and officers continue to lobby TfL on their decision to pause both the Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf Bridge and alternative measures. Our administration remains committed to the development of a bridge and we continue to raise this in our meetings with TfL.

Councillors Johnson Situ and Bill Williams both met with Heidi Alexander on 2 September to lobby for the bridge and discuss the way forward. The leader and I also met with Mike Brown, the Chief Executive of TfL on 15 October and made clear that we would continue to make our strong case for the bridge.

Officers have also corresponded with TfL concerning the ferry landing sites and their investigation into an electric ferry vehicle.

On the bike hire extension, we have now mapped out our proposed sites for Santander docking stations running from the Thames through the Rotherhithe peninsula and down to Burgess Park and beyond. In October, Cabinet agreed the strategy for this extension and we will see additional cycle provision in the near future.

We have worked with TfL to refine bicycle hire sites beside CS4 and Jamaica Road. The council continues to seek further funding from TfL and other sources to deliver more docking station sites.

During this time we continue to have regular meetings with TfL to lobby them to progress alternative arrangements, including the Bakerloo Line Extension.

**29. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS**

Could the cabinet member please provide an update on the council's work to reduce the level of missed refuse and recycling collections by Veolia?

**RESPONSE**

In May 2019, Veolia rescheduled collection routes for general and recyclable waste to rebalance routes and even out workloads between crews and working days. This resulted in some disruption until crews become familiar with new routes.

The disruption extended over a much longer period than would be considered acceptable, with missed collections peaking at a 0.16% of all collections during the summer, before dropping to just under 0.08%. Good performance is 0.03% or better.

The council has therefore issued a formal contract notice to the contractor setting out the performance improvements required. This made clear the requirement that:

- The number of missed collections should be reduced to within normal levels as quickly as possible.
- Reported missed collections must be addressed within 2 working days.
- Reporting of collection performance to be quicker, more accurate, and more regular.

There have been a number of improvements introduced by the contractor including:

- Fewer collections missed – halved since the summer.
- Misses rectified quickly – most within 1 day of reporting, and fewer repeat misses.
- More quality checks to minimise previously ongoing problems from recurring.
- New systems for data management so that reporting is quicker and more accurate. These will be producing improvements from January onwards.

While performance has improved, further improvement is still clearly required. Officers continue to monitor the contractor to ensure that improvements continue.

I have instructed officers to provide a written weekly update to me on the collection performance of the contractor which confirms the level of missed collections, and what is being done by the contractor to ensure the standard of service to the public is restored to the previous levels of good performance. I expect this to begin with the first report by the end of January.