

Item No. 21.	Classification: Open	Date: 24 March 2020	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Southwark Great Estates Guarantee	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Leo Pollak, Social Regeneration, Great Estates and New Council Homes	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR LEO POLLAK, CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL REGENERATION, GREAT ESTATES AND NEW COUNCIL HOMES

The Great Estates programme reset our vision for the future of Southwark council estates, to 'expand and enrich' our estates towards making them prized spaces to live in, and the initiation of estate improvement plans across dozens of estates we are well placed to pull towards our pledge to ensure our estates are properly safe clean and cared for.

The following report brings together a review of our service level standards, describing a new set of resident and council responsibilities to go out to consultation on, as well as a four key new initiatives designed to elevate ours and residents' expectations and carving out the route towards making our council estates better places to live.

Firstly, following the recruitment of two community gardening coordinators, we will be establishing a new Allotment Expansion Guarantee. Where residents want to establish new secure food-growing plots on their estate, and where the residents' maintenance plan can be demonstrated, we will enable this. We will also be working with existing gardening and growing networks and horticulturalists across the borough to keep a new council-run allotment waiting list. Anecdotally the potential of this initiative could take on real significance not solely for creating new security on communal areas on our estates, but in creating a new infrastructure for healthy sustainable food-growing and food security for our borough.

Secondly, we are establishing a new Waste Infrastructure Standard. Many of our blocks were built to handle a smaller volume of waste than is now the case, and it's widely understood the importance of how refuse arrangements can affect the psychology of estate living. To this end, we describe a new standard to ensure that any bins that are poorly located, overflowing or in a state of disrepair meet a positive new standard at the next asset management round or earlier. We also include a new standard for bins located next to block entrances to be in exemplary condition, alongside experimenting with new kinds of bin design and stores on our pilot estates.

Thirdly, we are developing a new guide for all major works operatives, way-leave and infrastructure engineers on *how to touch a council block*. This guidance will specify that following works on our estates, blocks are left in exemplary condition, respecting the form and appearance of the block. This will extend to how cabling and tracking of new or existing infrastructure is signed off as well as where painting and cleaning come in to the scope of works during major works. Where an accumulation of external elements have damaged the appearance of several of our blocks, the details of this important guide will be finalised in the upcoming housing asset management strategy this Summer.

Fourthly, we will be piloting a new estate-wide lighting strategy on one of our estate improvement plan pilots to soften and secure unsafe spots, following a series of nightwalks and lighting workshops with residents.

These key programmes will help drive forward our wider agenda of working with residents on practical initiatives to improve the look and feel of many of our estates, and towards the aspiration we share with residents for our estates to become truly prized spaces in the city.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the Cabinet

1. That cabinet gives approval to undertake consultation with residents on the set of baseline commitments within the Great Estates Guarantee as set out in paragraphs 16 - 43 and detailed in appendices one and two.
2. That cabinet notes the approach to introducing new secure growing spaces on estate land; gives approval to the adoption of a new allotment expansion guarantee; and to keep a new estate-based allotment waiting list.
3. To note that the council's asset management strategy will set out the approach to managing the external appearance of homes so that they are left clean and tidy, and any interventions respect the form and appearance of the building.
4. To note that a new lighting strategy will be delivered on one of the estate improvement pilots, learning from this pilot will be applied on other estates.
5. To note that work is underway to develop a new waste infrastructure standard.

Recommendation for the Leader

6. To delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Social Regeneration, Great Estates and New Council Homes to approve the Great Estates Guarantee following consultation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

7. The Council Plan 2018-2022 includes the following commitment:
 - To launch a Great Estates guarantee so that every estate is clean, safe and cared for.
8. The Great Estates Programme is formed of three components:

The vision – The Southwark Great Estates vision was agreed by Cabinet in December 2018. This has now been summarised in this report as part of the work on the guarantee. The full vision is to:

- Celebrate our council estates – We will celebrate our estates and be ambitious about their future. We will always be honest about the challenges, and challenge ourselves to make Southwark estates the best they can be.

- Encourage integration – Our estates are part of the bedrock of Southwark. Mixed communities are integral to the future of the borough and have a part to play in its economy and wellbeing. We want to expand and enrich our estates, with redevelopment always a last resort.
- Respect where we live – Working with residents every estate should be clean, safe and cared for. Communities should have ownership over their estate and a shared stake in its future. High standards of repair and maintenance will mean Southwark’s estates are great places to live.

The Estate Improvement Plans – These were set out in the March 2019 Paper 2 Cabinet Report. These form part of the tools to enable residents to make improvements to their estates. The report sets out the approach to estate improvement plans and how these would be tested through a number of pilots. Pilots have now been agreed for the following estates: Canada Estate, Rockingham Estate, Elmington Estate, Brandon Estate, Rye Hill, Kingswood and Friary Estate. Many factors were considered in selecting these estates including: provision of new homes, major works, other investment, anti-social behaviour and criminality, and environmental factors. Further estate improvement plans will be developed as part of the ‘first contact’ approach for a number of upcoming new council homes sites. There was also agreement to recruit a Community Gardening Coordinator.

The Great Estates Guarantee –The Guarantee will help ensure that the council and our residents are working effectively together to make our estates clean, safe and cared for.

9. The Great Estates Programme will be aligned through the estate improvement pilots with other major council programmes such as the new homes programme and the council’s housing investment programme. Through the pilots we will develop more effective ways of working.
10. The council plans to have 2,500 homes built or onsite by May 2022. The council is ensuring that plans for new homes, housing investment and the Great Estates programmes are linked.
11. The Great Estates Programme also works closely with the council’s Community Safety Partnership (CSP). This is made up of six “responsible authorities” that work together to reduce crime, anti social behaviour, reoffending, substance misuse and any other behaviour which may have a negative effect on the local environment. The authorities include the Local Authority (joint lead), Police (joint lead), Fire and Rescue Authority, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company and the Clinical Commissioning Group.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

12. The Council is ready to work with residents to develop a new set of standards for day-to-day management of our housing estates, to help ensure that the council and our residents are working effectively together to make our estates clean, safe and cared for. The Guarantee will be publicly available on the Council’s website and will provide residents with a clear expectation of the level of service which will be provided.

Vision summary

13. To create council estates that allow expansion, enriching the lives of residents, encouraging integration, and working with residents so that every estate is clean, safe, cared for, and a great place to live.

COUNCIL GUARANTEE

14. The guarantee will set out what the council will do to help make estates clean, safe and cared for. These commitments are set out in detail in appendix two.

Clean

15. Our estates are routinely inspected jointly with volunteer residents. Cleanliness standards are high but there remains room for improvement. The council's ambition is to have a clearly defined waste management strategy. The strategy will be costed and funding is to be identified.
16. As part of waste management strategy a new waste standard is to be developed, this will include, ensuring that:
 - Bins are placed in a clearly demarcated area, located in a convenient and safe place, while ensuring that bins can be efficiently collected;
 - Where bins are located beside a block entrance they will be in exemplary condition;
 - Bins are emptied regularly and will not be left overflowing;
 - Bins will not be in a state of visible disrepair, but will be maintained in a good condition and replaced when needed;
 - Recycling rates will be maximised.
17. Through the Estate Improvement Pilots we will trial new ways of managing waste on estates. The pilots could consider a number of areas including: the type and appearance of bins, how bin areas are arranged, signage and lighting of bin areas. The Great Estates Programme has a dedicated funding pot, but we will seek to draw on other funding streams such as funding for major works, section 106, Community Infrastructure Levies and other means.

Cared for

18. Central to the delivery of the Great Estates Guarantee will be the completion of major works on our estates. The council is currently intending to invest £100m per year on our estates through the Quality Home Improvement Plan (QHIP). The QHIP programme will provide decent homes for our residents and improve the lives of residents.
19. The council has a named Resident Services Officer (RSO) for each estate, the details of which are displayed on notice boards at the entrance to the estate. Details will also be available on MySouthwark.
20. Resident Service Officers schedule a monthly cycle of estate inspections for the year and share this with TRA representatives and volunteers. Residents are welcome to accompany the RSO during estate inspections.

21. The council would like residents to be fully engaged and involved in the management of their estates. We will assist residents to set up TRAs and TMOs where there is an interest.
22. The council has a defined approach to carrying out repairs. The priorities and timescales are set out in appendix two. The council is exploring options for using new technology such as using smart web-based detectors which can automatically report faults on boilers, door entry systems, lifts etc. We are also expanding the roll out of broadband to all estates.
23. The council will develop and adopt new guidance for all major works operatives, way-leave and infrastructure engineers on how to touch a council block. This guidance will specify that following works on our estates, blocks are left in a proper condition. The details will be finalised in the upcoming housing asset management strategy.
24. The council will build on our existing work of being inclusive with residents by delivering the outcomes of the Resident Engagement Review.
25. The council has a commitment to tackling disused commercial buildings, through a pragmatic approach to lettings having regard to local need. This includes flexible lease terms as per the Commercial Property Asset Management Plan. In some cases the best option may be alternative use, such as hidden homes.
26. The council has recruited two part-time community gardening coordinators. The purpose of this role is to work with volunteer groups across our estates to co-ordinate activity and also encourage more people to engage in gardening activities. Such activities will include growing of fruit and vegetables to promote healthy eating. Residents are encouraged to take part in communal gardening on the estate. The council will commit to expand the availability of allotments on our estates. We expect the cost of providing these will be in the region of £1,500 to £2000 and we would aim to offset some or all of the costs through a resident charge. A clear set of criteria will be defined for allotment development. Where there is a clear existing or planned use for the area, such as leisure facilities or proposed use for new homes allotments will not be considered. The approval process will also include sign-off by the TRA.

Safe

27. The council will take appropriate measures to keep residents safe from crime and anti social behaviour. Residents are advised to contact their Resident Services Officer in the first instance. In all cases we will take action against residents who engage in anti social behaviour on our estates. Further details can be found in chapter seven of the Tenants' Handbook – Respecting others.
28. We are working towards making homes safe and secure. This includes regular maintenance and conducting Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs). The council will publish all assessments of blocks above seven storeys online.
29. As we develop new council homes we will ensure all new developments incorporate 'secured by design' principles, focusing on the evidence link between designing out crime and improved security to buildings and the surrounding areas. Such measures may include effective external lighting and provision of CCTV.

30. We have used a number of methods to improve lighting. These measures include replacing fluorescent lighting with LED lighting, adding bulk head wall lights and replacing floodlights to LED. Further work is planned to investigate how we can make better use of lighting across our estates, both in terms of managing ASB and crime, and reducing energy usage. One of our Estate Improvement Pilots will have a particular focus on improving lighting, and we will engage support from experts in the field. The learning identified from this pilot will be rolled out across other estates.
31. The council commits to providing a 24 hour emergency response in cases of flooding, road traffic accidents and civil emergencies. Repairs will be responded to within two hours where there is a danger to health and safety, or within four hours for repairs to heating, estate lighting or door entry systems.
32. We have a number of further aspirations we are working towards; as this work progresses it may form part of the Guarantee in future. These include investigating ways to provide sources of information, such as displaying digital notice boards at the entrance to estates and broadening our digital infrastructure programme.

RESIDENT OBLIGATIONS

33. While the council has a key role to play in ensuring estates are clean, safe and cared for, this can only be achieved in partnership with our residents. Therefore the guarantee will also set out what residents can do to help make their estates great places to live. These responsibilities are set out in detail at appendix one.

Clean

34. Residents should keep their home and gardens clean and tidy, taking responsibility for any items left by families and visitors.
35. Residents should recycle to reduce the impact on the environment and reduce the amount of rubbish going to landfill sites. It is also important not to block chutes with bulky rubbish which can lead to rubbish overflows, encouraging pests and vermin.
36. Residents should arrange collections of bulky rubbish and not fly tip or abandon vehicles on the estate as this encourages more waste and anti social behaviour.

Cared for

37. Residents should take care and not damage the decoration in communal areas, and are requested to report communal and other repairs. It is important not to overload lifts or allow their children to play with lifts as this can lead to malfunction, and they should report any issues of disrepair promptly.
38. Residents should advise any contractors or service operatives not to install signage or external fixtures to the structure of buildings in order to maintain the character of the estate, and refer to the council's design guidelines for further information.

Safe

39. Residents should follow fire safety instructions and observe fire safety advice in order to minimise risk. We ask that residents not leave any items in common areas or prop open fire doors.
40. Residents must ensure they have working fire alarms in their home and commit to testing them regularly. Any fire or suspicion of fire must be reported immediately.
41. Residents should promptly report any communal repairs or health and safety issues. Ensuring dog waste is safely disposed of and dogs are kept on leads where appropriate.
42. In order for the council to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour, it is important for residents to assist authorities in relation to any incidents; and take responsibility for the behaviour of family and visitors to the estate.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

43. The council is working jointly with residents to develop the standards and guarantees. The council will also work collaboratively with residents to ensure the commitments are met through agreed performance standards and quality monitoring. Residents will be encouraged to attend regular estate inspections and to take responsibility for reporting issues and raising any concerns.

Policy implications

44. At this stage Cabinet is being requested to approve the set of baseline commitments set out within this paper. The baseline commitments are found at paragraph 16 through to 43 and are set out in further detail as an appendix to this report.
45. This paper is limited to detailing the guarantee and commitments that will underline the Great Estates programme; as such there are no further policy implications at this stage.

Community impact statement

46. The council is committed to improve the local area and the quality of life for the whole community who live there. The Guarantee and Commitments paper has been developed with tenants to agree a baseline set of standards that ensure the council's estates are clean, safe and cared for and benefit all communities living in our estates.

Resource implications

47. Actions arising from this report will be delivered through existing resources.

Legal implications

48. In this report Cabinet is being requested to agree the principles of the Great Estates Programme – Guarantee and Commitments and approve consultation with residents.

Financial implications

49. Cabinet considered and agreed the financial implications at the onset of the Great Estates Programme. The Guarantee and Commitments will be managed within existing resources.

Consultation

50. The council held a public call for ideas on the Great Estates Programme - Estate Improvement Plans through an online survey on the Council's consultation hub. Hard copies of the survey were also provided at Community Councils. The consultation took place from 20 May 2019 to 01 July 2019. There was a large response; 388 responses were received, many of which were incredibly detailed and covered suggestions from across the range of issues; gardening projects, community art, waste, cleaning, community activities etc. These comments have informed the estate improvement plans pilots, and the comments will also inform any wider roll out of the programme following the pilots.
51. The Guarantee is part of the overall programme. The council will publically consult on the guarantee and the resident obligations detailed in this report and within appendices one and two. This will be added to the council's online consultation hub for a period of 6 weeks commencing as soon as possible taking account of the purdah period for the Mayor of London elections. This will be publicised through the council's housing news publications, website and social media accounts.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

52. The report recommends that cabinet give approval to undertake consultation. To meet legal requirements consultation must be undertaken when proposals are still at a formative stage; include sufficient reasons for the proposals to allow interested parties the opportunity to consider the proposal and formulate a response; allow adequate time for interested parties to consider proposals and formulate their response and the outcome of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.
53. The public sector Equality Duty, in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires the council to consider all individuals when carrying out their functions. Due regard must be given, when carrying out council functions to eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct; advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and, fostering good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and those that do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The equality duty is a continuing one. Officers will need to actively consider the duty during the consultation process and when formulating recommendations for final decision making.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

54. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance notes the recommendation to undertake consultation with residents on the set of baseline commitments for the Great Estates Programme. There are no financial implications arising as a result

of this report, however, all agreed commitments will need to be managed within the Great Estates annual budget of £970k or alternative existing budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
The Council Plan 2018-2022	Chief Executives Office	Stephen Gaskell 0207 525 500
http://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/council-plan		
Southwark Great Estates Programme - Paper 1 - Agreeing the Vision and Approach	Housing Strategy	Robert Weallans 0207 525 500
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6665		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Great Estates Guarantee and Commitments table – Residents' responsibilities
Appendix 2	Great Estates Guarantee and Commitments table – the Council

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Cllr Leo Pollak, Cabinet Member for Social Regeneration, Great Estates and New Council Homes	
Lead Officer	Paul Langford, Director of Resident Services	
Report Author	Sheryl Charles, Housing Strategy Implementation Officer	
Version	Final	
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Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
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