

Item No. 6.	Classification: Open	Date: 24 March 2010	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Members' Question Time	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.8 members' question time shall not exceed 30 minutes. During this time, members may not question any one executive member or committee chair for longer than fifteen minutes.

Members are limited to one question at each meeting.

Questions to the leader will be taken first, followed by questions to other executive members and on the portfolio for education and school attainment. The order in which the different political groups ask questions of the leader will be rotated. Questions to executive members will be taken in the order of receipt and portfolio. The order of portfolios will be rotated at each meeting such that the executive member answering questions immediately after the leader will be the last executive member to answer any questions at the next meeting of council assembly.

Executive members and committee chairs have discretion to refer a question to another executive member if this is appropriate.

Responses to member's questions will be circulated on yellow paper around the council chamber on the evening of the meeting.

The Mayor will ask the member asking the question if they wish to ask one supplemental question to the member to whom the question was asked. The supplemental question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. Therefore, supplemental questions to the leader or other executive members are not free ranging.

No question shall be asked on a matter concerning a planning or licensing application.

Note: In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.8 (12) & (13) (prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the order in which questions to the leader appear in this report may not necessarily be the order in which they are considered at the meeting.

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL

In 1995 Tony Blair said “If the Labour government has not raised the living standards of the poorest by the end of its time in office, it will have failed.” Given the report of the National Equality Panel (January 2010) states “inequality in any dimension is wider in London than in any other region, and inequality in earnings and income has increased faster in London over the last decade than anywhere else” would it be fair to say that Labour have failed? And given that Southwark has a wide gap between rich and poor would it be fair to say Labour has particularly failed the people of Southwark?

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN

Will the leader publish a list of all of the council tower blocks and estates that he would be willing to sell to private developers in exactly the same way he intends to sell Maydew House?

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR COLUMBA BLANGO

In 2006 the Liberal Democrats pledge to open three new secondary schools, in the north, centre and south of the borough – how has that commitment been fulfilled?

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD

Why has the executive member not yet produced his plans for the allocation of money from the government to build new school classrooms?

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD THOMAS

Does the leader agree that it is indefensible that after 13 years of Labour government more than 20,000 children in Southwark are still living in poverty – enough to fill 66 primary schools?

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR OLAJUMOKE OYEWUNMI

How has his administration fulfilled its pledge to give more powers to wardens to crack down on anti-social behaviour and street drinking.? And what benefits are there for residents and businesses through a reduction in anti-social behaviour?

7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN JARDINE-BROWN

According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation there are now more households in significant poverty (where household incomes were below 40% of median income) than had ever been recorded in history. How does this square with Labour’s pledges to raise living standards for the poorest?

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER

In 2006 the Liberal Democrats pledged to double recycling – has this been achieved and what plans are there for further improvements to recycling over the next four years?

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BOB SKELLY

It’s been estimated Labour’s failed Metronet public/private partnership schemes, has cost the taxpayer more than £400 million. What would this money have been better spent on?

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DENISE CAPSTICK

How much so far has been raised by the Mayor's charity for Help for Heroes?

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MACKIE SHEIK

On Monday 1 March, Nick Clegg spoke to the Salvation Army at their HQ on Newington Causeway in the inaugural Social Justice Lecture. What lessons were there for Southwark?

12. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ALTHEA SMITH

What assurances can the executive member give that Seven Islands Leisure Centre will be able to provide a full service for its users throughout 2010?

13. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORT FROM JANE SALMON

Could the executive member outline the progress made towards refurbishing or replacing all of Southwark's leisure centres and upgrade them to 21st century standards.

14. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE

How much has the council paid out in "performance related pay for senior managers at the top two tiers" (written response to members question 17, council assembly 27/01/2010) since 2006?

15. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER

What ratio of members of staff to desks does the council require on each floor of the Tooley Street building to secure the efficiency savings that the executive have promised year after year? What are the current ratios of desk occupancy by floor?

16. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE ZULETA

In 2006 the Liberal Democrats promised to 'Keep council tax low – less than the London average' – how has he fulfilled that manifesto commitment?

17. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI

By how much did tenants rents and service charges rise in Southwark this year and how does this compare with Lambeth?

18. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER

Given that more than half of all low income households are now paying full council tax, much higher than a decade ago what measures is the council taking to make sure the tax burden doesn't hit those least able to pay?

19. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH & ADULT CARE FROM COUNCILLOR DORA DIXON-FYLE

The Care Quality Commission's Independence, Wellbeing and Choice Report makes 18 recommendations for Southwark's adult social care services. Which of these does the executive member not intend to take action on?

20. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH & ADULT CARE FROM COUNCILLOR ADE LASAKI

With the proportion of people living in relative poverty in the UK almost twice that of the Netherlands, and one-and-half times that of France what challenges does this bring to the provision of health and social care?

21. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH & ADULT CARE FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES GURLING

Given the high numbers of Southwark residents in low paid employment, how did the withdrawal of the 10p tax rate impact on those with very low incomes and what impact does poverty have on local peoples' health?

22. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH & ADULT CARE FROM COUNCILLOR ALISON MCGOVERN

How many people does the executive member anticipate will not have been given the Freedom Pass they are entitled to by the deadline at the end of March?

23. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR ABDUL MOHAMED

When will a steering group consisting of residents (similar to the Aylesbury Regeneration Group - and as promised by Councillor Stanton at the last Walworth Community Council meeting) be set up to work on the regeneration of the Elephant and Castle?

24. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON

It appears that Southwark failed to renew its registration of the website designed to provide information to local residents and others about the Elephant and Castle regeneration (www.elephantandcastle.org.uk), meaning that it ceased to exist in February. What does say about the council's commitment to keeping the public informed about this regeneration?

25. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR CAROLINE PIDGEON

Transport for London are planning up to 82 weekend and early evening closures for the Northern Line. What impact will these have on businesses and residents who live near the Northern Line tube stations in Southwark?

26. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON

How many new affordable homes have been built or made available over the last four years?

27. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR JELIL LADIPO

What are the next steps on the Elephant and Castle regeneration?

28. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT SMEATH

Could the executive member give details of precisely what development will take place in the Peckham Rye Central Area in 2010-11 according to the current plans of the Liberal Democrat and Conservative administration, and how the council plans to pay for this development?

29. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN

In 1999 then Prime Minister, Tony Blair said in a speech at the Toynbee Hall "And I will set out our historic aim that ours is the first generation to end child poverty for ever, and it will take a generation, poverty should not be a birthright. Being poor should not be a life sentence. We need to break the cycle of disadvantage so that children born into poverty are not condemned to social exclusion and deprivation. It is a 20 year mission but I believe it can be done." He also pledged to halve child poverty by 2010 as an interim measure. How successful has Labour been in achieving this and what impact has it had on Southwark?

30. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR BARRIE HARGROVE

Could the executive member for environment confirm that there currently is a three week waiting time for cremations? If this is the case could he please confirm how this situation arose which is forcing bereaved families to arrange services in other boroughs so that their loved ones can be laid to rest?

31. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR GORDON NARDELL

2010 has so far seen two cyclists fatally injured in collisions with lorries on Southwark's roads, highlighting the threat that HGVs pose to cyclists. What measures does the executive member for environment propose to take to improve the safety of cyclists on those roads under Southwark Council's control?

32. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER

The road surface on East Street is still a hazard for stall holders on the market and shoppers, despite repeated assurances that it will be properly improved. When will East Street be resurfaced?

33. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR TOBY ECKERSLEY

Would the executive member for the environment please outline the steps he, or other executive members, have taken to make common cause with other London boroughs concerned about the threat to through running northwards beyond Blackfriars of trains using the Thameslink Wimbledon loop; and would he give his views about the detriment to passengers using this service from Herne Hill and Elephant and Castle that termination at Blackfriars would cause, with particular reference to Crossrail.

34. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD

A scrutiny sub-committee recently heard shocking evidence from tenants of the continued failings of the dysfunctional repairs service. These include homes left without power for four weeks, prospective tenants being asked to take possession of flats which are in unsanitary condition, workmen regularly turning up without tools and contractors over specifying for simple repairs. Is the executive member for housing prepared to continue to assert that the repairs service is providing an acceptable service to Southwark residents?

35. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR TAYO SITU

Will the executive member for citizenship, equalities and communities join me in condemning the decision by Conservative Mayor Boris Johnson to cut funding for Black History Month events from £132,000 to just £10,000? Will she commit to continued funding from Southwark Council for Black History Month?

36. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL BATES

Can the executive member detail the funding arrangements of the Aylesbury Community Reassurance project over the last year and then explain the funding arrangements for 2010-11 and 2011-12?

37. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN FRIARY

Recent statistics show that violent crime in Southwark is back on the rise. Is the executive member concerned that police cuts and CCTV cuts will only add to this trend and the fear of violent crime?