

APPENDIX 2

Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), 7 May and Cabinet response

Recommendation from OSC	Cabinet Response
1. That the decisions of cabinet in respect of the council response to Covid-19 pandemic be note and supported.	Noted
2. That the council provide overall coordination to ensure that aid duplication is avoided between the NHS, Southwark Council Community Hub operations, charities, religious institutions and mutual aid groups as well as formally recognising the role of the thousands of volunteers supporting the effort in these unprecedented times. Until now there is no one visibly taking the lead across all bodies. Many charities, religious groups and residents are still looking to the Council to be that body.	Agreed; A report will be presented to Cabinet in September 2020 that takes forward the work of the Community Hub
3. That the council ensure that it is using all resources available to best use during a crisis or in the event that business continuity procedures are invoked. Councillors hold a great deal of knowledge about their wards and the council must ensure this is leveraged to avoid duplication of knowledge. The role of councillor must be clearly defined as part of the Council Business Continuity Plans.	Agreed; The Council regularly reviews business continuity arrangements taking account of learning from incidents including role of councillors. The Council's Generic Emergency Plan will be presented to Cabinet in July 2020. The role of councillors is set out in the package of supporting documents for the Council's Emergency Plan, including what to do in an incident and their role as advocates and in community reassurance. Guidance on the role of councillors is also set out in London wide planning documents, as part of the London Resilience Framework and approach to consistent standards in emergency planning across the city. This guidance was shared earlier in the year and will be recirculated with appropriate briefings as a follow up action.
4. That as part of new councillor induction, all Councillors should receive a briefing on the Council's Business Continuity plan and training on the role of Councillors during an event which invokes the Business Continuity response, especially a crisis.	Agreed; Alongside induction, officers provide regular briefings to members on business continuity and emergency planning in line with pan-London 'standardisation' work. This work will be refreshed in the light of the recommendation set out.
5. That a cross party working group be established as soon as possible to help plan for the borough post the lifting of the Covid-19 lockdown.	Agreed; Cabinet have agreed to review and refresh the Council Plan to put in place plans for the short to medium

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	terms, including wider engagement with all party groups.
6. That cabinet ensure that it is clearly outlined over the coming two months what the transition plan is around mutual aid groups providing adult care services. This is to give assurance that there is a smooth process in place for the council to find out which adult services of care mutual aids are carrying out and how the council plans to take this on when volunteers return to work/no longer have the capacity to provide the same level of care.	Agreed; The legacy support to vulnerable residents supported by local mutual aid groups will be incorporated into the future planning for the Community Hub. A report on future approach to the Hub will be brought in September 2020.
7. That cabinet take proactive steps to co-ordinate weekly testing of all care staff and residents in Southwark care homes as a matter of urgency, in order to ascertain the level of Covid-19 infection.	Agreed; The borough support plan for care homes incorporates testing for all care home residents and staff. There is a work programme led by the Director of Public Health and Director of Commissioning providing support to care homes for testing.
8. That cabinet liaise with each Southwark care home provider to ensure that the relevant PPE and levels of PPE are being used in each local care home, to protect care staff as much as possible.	Agreed; The relevant PPE (as per Public Health England guidance at each stage) and levels of PPE have been sustained for care homes across the borough to protect residents and staff as much as possible.
9. That cabinet monitor the pay of care staff at this time, to ensure that none of these low paid workers are being disadvantaged at this time, especially if they have to self-isolate themselves or shield themselves due to their medical conditions, as there is some evidence in the care industry, that some care workers are receiving less than their usual OSP during this crisis.	Agreed; Funding is being provided to ensure that care home staff are paid their full salary if they are off ill or self-isolating due to Covid-19.
10. That cabinet remind all care providers to adhere to the key principles of the Ethical Care Charter that exists across the borough, especially at this difficult time.	Agreed; The Southwark Ethical Care Charter applies to all council commissioned home care provision across the borough and is being fully implemented.
11. That in respect of some key figures which will ultimately need to be acted upon, cabinet be recommended to establish the number of vulnerable and shielded individuals that the council has not been able to make contact with via any of its departments [and adapt the council's outreach strategy to get this figure to as near to zero as practical].	Agreed; A report will be presented to Cabinet in September 2020 that takes forward the work of the Community Hub
12. That in respect of some key figures which will ultimately need to be acted upon, cabinet be recommended to confirm the Council's own	Agreed; The council has supported schools and has encouraged vulnerable children to attend school. Laptops

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<p>estimates of the number of vulnerable children not physically attending schools that need assistance (e.g. equipment, internet) to effectively access education</p>	<p>(and in some cases internet access too) are being provided to vulnerable children.</p>
<p>13. That once the Government has allowed schools to reopen under safe circumstances, the council look at what support it can offer in terms of afterschool, weekend and holiday clubs to assist children to catch up on missed schooling. This support could be funding for schools, providing space in council buildings or helping to coordinate DBS checked volunteers to offer appropriate provision</p>	<p>Agreed; The council will work with parents and schools to help children catch-up on their learning and development due to the disruption caused by the pandemic and the Government decision to close schools for most children.</p>
<p>14. That the council monitor the number of nurseries and daycare centres for liquidity, capacity and ability to function post lock down. If there is a shortfall the council should rapidly agree a plan and put the appropriate provisions in place. Additionally, it should monitor the demand for number of paid 2, 3 and 4 year old places and see if additional provision is required/can be supported.</p>	<p>Agreed; The council is directly working with the five nursery schools and the 16 children and family centres in the borough to ensure their sustainability. Wider sufficiency will be kept under review and supported as much as possible noting the limited role for, and funding available to, the council in regard to private provision.</p>
<p>15. That cabinet consider what the council might be able to do to mitigate any negative impact of COVID 19 on childcare provision.</p>	<p>Agreed; See response to (14) above.</p>
<p>16. That the council examine how it can review its procurement procedures to promote and prioritise local businesses (particularly SMEs) for example using local contractors to bring empty homes back into use.</p>	<p>Agreed; Plans for economic recovery and renewal will take account of procurement and prioritising support to SMEs. A review of the Fairer Future Procurement Framework will take place.</p>
<p>17. That the cabinet ensure the continued prioritisation of mental health & wellbeing and partnership working with the NHS and SLAM.</p>	<p>Agreed; Ongoing work through the Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership will continue to enhance local responses to reducing the Covid impacts on mental health. The Nest (the council funded new service for young people) has launched and is supporting their emotional health and wellbeing.</p>
<p>18. Overview and scrutiny committee welcomes the measures put in place to support social distancing through maximising pedestrian space and calls on cabinet to continue identifying measures that can be taken to make streets safer for keyworkers, essential journeys and physical exercise during lockdown and in the longer term to support increased cycling and walking.</p>	<p>Agreed; Commonplace (an online reporting tool) is being used to source feedback from the public as to where they would like to see improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure and traffic reduction to support social distancing.</p> <p>Work is continuing through a multi-disciplinary team to</p>

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	<p>identify pinch points and the solutions to aid public realm social distancing. This includes parking suspensions, traffic management and footway widening. A Southwark Streetspace Plan will be presented to Cabinet in July 2020.</p>
<p>19. That the Southwark Climate Strategy team actively consider how to embrace the environmental opportunities the lockdown has provided before people return to the way things were.</p>	<p>Agreed; The Council will be working with community stakeholders through its Partnership Steering Group to consider this as part of the work developing the strategy which is due to be presented to Cabinet in July.</p>
<p>20. That the Council (with Transport for London) take steps to prioritise pedestrians, runners and cyclists to keep two metres apart on most roads. This is an opportunity to trial the priority of these groups on roads, by, for example, ensuring non-major roads are prioritised for pedestrians (and cyclists) and introducing temporary traffic calming/access measures on residential streets. Ward councillors should be consulted on how to do this sympathetically. We also support the recommendations from Southwark Cyclists in response to COVID-19.</p>	<p>Agreed; A significant programme to deliver projects to support modal shift and prioritise non-motorised movements is underway. This includes the cycleway expansions, closures to reduce traffic on residential streets and school streets and traffic management to aid cycle and pedestrian movements.</p> <p>Work is also ongoing for the further development of walking and cycling networks through the acceleration in delivery of Low Emission Neighbourhood, cycle parking facilities, road closures and traffic reduction schemes.</p> <p>Officers are working with TfL to provide temporary cycle routes to extend the strategic cycle network, with Southwark's main roads repurposed for temporary cycle lanes and wider footways.</p> <p>Identification of possible projects and development work is underway in conjunction with stakeholder groups such as Southwark Cyclists.</p>
<p>21. That the cabinet investigate extending the council tax reduction scheme of 100% of council tax to all *low income households (*as currently defined by the council) during the financial year 2020/21.</p>	<p>Agreed; Despite reductions in funding Southwark has continued to maintain one of the most supportive Council Tax Reduction schemes in London with up to 85% in relief for those in most need. An additional hardship discount to an average value of £139 was applied on the council tax bills of the lowest income, working age households this year. This extra help, equated to a total value of all awards of £2.2m. These discounts were applied to 16,000 accounts in May and will mean many CTRS recipients won't pay any Council Tax</p>

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	in 2020/21; many will see their bills greatly reduced. In addition, the Council is going further than required by government and offering the additional discount to new claimants as well as existing CTRS claimants.
22. That cabinet investigate offering all Southwark council tenants who request it, a 'holiday' from paying rent in the current financial year with the arrears incurred to be paid off slowly over a mutually agreed time frame (e.g. 2-3 years). This payment holiday would exclude any part of the rent which is paid for by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.	Agreed; At the outset of the pandemic, the Council paused all recovery and enforcement activity. All tenants were written to encouraging them to contact officers to discuss alternative payment arrangements and where appropriate advice on claiming welfare benefits or hardship support has been provided. Officers will continue to contact tenants and offer advice and support including deferral of rent if appropriate.
23. That the council write to housing associations and registered social landlords (including the Corporation of London) in Southwark to request a similar payment holiday and repayment plan to be offered to tenants in housing association properties.	Agreed; action underway in line with recommendation.
24. That the council bolster the support available from the council for tenants who are renting privately, and should publicly call on private landlords to offer their tenants payment holidays similar to the schemes outlined above.	Agreed; The Council will be providing support to private tenants to establish renters union and the Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Modernisation will write to private landlords in line with the recommendation opposite.
25. That the council write to all residents to inform them of these new arrangements and any other financial support which is available to support them in this difficult time. The Council should ensure this information is localised (where appropriate) and produced in a range of accessible formats and languages.	Agreed; The Council will use all existing communication channels to inform and update on offers of support to residents.
26. That cabinet provide an update to overview and scrutiny committee as soon as information is received from the government on what the council plans are regarding homeless people that have no recourse to public funds.	Agreed; Discussion are underway with officers and MHCLG on the government's future plans with further updates to be provided, once available.
27. That the council commit to ensuring that all those being temporarily housed during the pandemic are not forced to return to the streets after the pandemic. We believe this could provide an opportunity to explore a rapid expansion of the 'Housing First' policy.	Agreed; The Council is committed to do all it can to ensure rough sleepers and those made homeless are not returned to street. This will include consideration of 'Housing First'. To note that the Council may legally be prevented in providing assistance to some people who may be designated as no

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	recourse to public funds. Also, 'Housing First will require a significant increase in revenue support from the government and discussions are underway with MHCLG (see 26).
28. That it be noted that there was a promise to provide more information to overview and scrutiny committee on the outcome of domestic abuse cases for example whether perpetrators have left or whether the survivors have had to move.	Agreed and further information to follow when available.
29. That a report is presented to the September Cabinet meeting outlining the resulting benefits from remote and flexible working during the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in utilising technological innovation and reviewing the use and potential savings from the Council's office estate.	Agreed; a further report will be presented to Cabinet in September 2020.
30. That a report be presented to the July Cabinet meeting outlining the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council Plan 2018-22 in terms of changed targets and timescales, and specifically any changes relating to the Council's Emergency Plan.	Agreed; Cabinet have agreed to review and refresh the Council Plan, bringing a report back to September 2020. The Council's Generic Emergency Plan will be presented to Cabinet in July 2020.
31. Overview and scrutiny committee welcomes the establishment of a review by Public Health England into disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 on BAME groups and calls on cabinet to assess how to carry out the council's own review in Southwark of the impact of both Covid-19 and the council's response on people from black and minority ethnic groups.	Agreed; Subject to agreement of this report, the council will take forward a programme of work to respond to the inequalities exposed by COVID-19 and other recent events, and articulated by the Black Lives Matter protests, reporting back to Cabinet in September 2020.
32. That overview and scrutiny committee calls on cabinet to investigate how the council can collect borough-level disaggregated data on the impact of Covid on different groups including women, children, the elderly and people from minority ethnic groups.	Agreed; A series of surveys, (virtual) listening and workshop sessions and in-depth interviews will be conducted over the coming months.
33. That cabinet assess whether Council communications are adequately reaching all residents, for example those for whom English is a second language.	Agreed; The council regularly reviews its COVID-19 communication strategy to ensure it is reaching its target audiences with the right messaging. We will continue to do this as we move towards renewal, to ensure all our residents are able to access key information from the council.
34. That in respect of cabinet decision 11 of the report in respect of the council continuing to work with voluntary and community sector	Agreed; A further report will be presented to Cabinet, as part of the report on the future approach to the Community Hub,

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partners to explore ways in which to take forward the work that has been delivered in partnership during this crisis. Cabinet is requested to bring forward initial recommendations to cabinet by September.	in September 2020.