

<b>Item No.</b> 6.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> June 27 2007	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Member's Question Time	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Director of Legal and Democratic Services	

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 3.9 member's question time shall not exceed 45 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 will be taken in the following order: the leader and the deputy leader and executive member for housing management, followed by the remaining executive members. The borough solicitor will rotate the order in which the different political groups ask questions of the leader and deputy leader (CAPR 3.9(10) & (11)). Questions to executive members other than the leader and deputy leader will be rotated according to member's respective portfolios.

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 3.9(10) & (11) (prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the order in which questions appear in this report may not necessarily be the order in which they are considered at the meeting.

**1. QUESTION TO THE MAYOR FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON**

Can you confirm on what date you first went on record apologising for your remarks about black school children as executive member for education and do you consider this consistent with having apologised “immediately”?

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR JELIL LADIPO**

Does the leader believe that making an unfortunate public comment, for which an apology is given, should bar a person from holding high public office in the future?

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR FIONA COLLEY**

Is the leader satisfied that, with the exception of the Nunhead Green community centre, all other council owned community halls and centres are safe for the public to use, and can he confirm when the executive will take a decision on the community halls review?

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL NOBLET**

In the light of the comment made by Councillor Rhule in the January 2007 issue of Councillor Magazine that she ‘believes the role of a councillor “should be made a proper full-time job” with all the remuneration that entails’, could the leader of the council provide details to council assembly of the likely costs of such a scheme?

**5. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

Could the executive member for housing give an update on the security works in the Four Squares estate and when they are likely to be completed?

**6. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL BATES**

What was the total 100 Days of Change budget, excluding direct housing related costs? Please include in your answer the costs of advertising and publicity, the two-page colour adverts celebrating the end of the 100 Days of Change, and the cost and nature of any events related to the programme.

**7. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN**

How many new locks were fitted by the council in council properties over an average 100-day period in 2006 and how many during the 100 days of change period?

**8. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE**

How much of the £500 million capital investment announced on Day 14 of the 100 Days of Change to bring Southwark's housing stock in line with the decent homes standard and for refurbishment and regeneration has been allocated by central government? And how much of the:

- £2 million refurbishment announced on Day 3 and Day 11
- £5 million lift repairs announced on Day 44
- £720,000 announced on Day 59
- £227,000 for heating announced on Day 57
- £6 million for Walworth announced on Day 74
- £180,000 for sheltered housing announced on Day 71
- £25 million for East Dulwich announced on Day 1 and Day 84
- £1.6 million announced on Day 81
- £1 million announced on Day 97

is money additional to the £500 million capital investment announced on Day 14?

Please itemise your answer.

**9. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR OLA OYEWUNMI**

How many different residents were surveyed as part of the Back in Touch feedback sessions, is there to be a follow-up Back in Touch resident satisfaction survey, will the responses to existing and future surveys be published in detail?

**10. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR DANNY McCARTHY**

I would like to thank the executive member for housing for his response to my question on the March 28 2007

Contained within that response you stated that the council used compulsory purchase orders (CPO's) against landlords in the private sector to ensure that these homes are brought back into use. Could Councillor Kim Humphreys please say how many CPO's have been used against landlords in the private sector since he became deputy leader and executive member for housing management. He has stated that as at April 2006 there were approx 2790 of which 496 were empty for more that 6 months. Are there more up to date figures?

**11. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR DOMINIC THORNCROFT**

What steps has the housing department taken to warn tenants who are being pressurised to take out loans from property companies supposedly to help them buy their homes, that taking out such a loan could mean the loss of their house or flat (*see article in the Observer March 25 2007*).

**12. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER**

Will the executive member for citizenship, communities and equalities make a statement on the awareness of residents of the borough about community councils?

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

Why did the council decide not to write a corporate equalities action plan for 2006-2010? What targets does the council have “explicitly aimed at promoting good race relations in the borough” (Ouseley report) and how many of the priorities set out in the government’s good race relations guide does the council have targets for?

**14. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR MARY FOULKES**

Despite the introduction of the Fast Forward programme and diversity training for senior officers, there is a decrease in BME staff in the council's top 5% earners between 2004 and 2006. 11% of council staff are on fixed term or agency contracts but 42% are BME staff are on these contracts. Disproportionately more BME staff are subject to disciplinary action. Can the executive member for citizenship, equalities and communities explain why there has been so little progress in improving the council's record on race equality and can he recommend practical solutions to improving this situation.

**15. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR ALTHEA SMITH**

Can the executive member outline when the report promised in the December council assembly on the bicentennial of slavery and related activities will be brought to council assembly? Can he also outline the total budget for activities related to the bicentennial?

**16. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR EVRIM LAWS**

When will the Audit Commission next review the council’s progress on meeting the recommendations of the Ouseley review?

**17. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR DORA DIXON FYLE**

What equalities work is the council developing to meet the issues raised in the Pensioners’ Forum Pensioners’ Manifesto 2006?

**18. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ANNE YATES**

Can the executive member for community safety outline any additional resources that have been received from central government to fund the enforcement of the smoking ban from July 1 2007?

**19. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN JARDINE-BROWN**

Will the executive member for community safety outline how wardens have improved the safety in each community council area?

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

Does the council expect to meet its public service agreement (PSA) commitments on crime and violent crime?

**21. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ALISON MCGOVERN**

Whether the executive member can list all involvement that officers have had or are having in the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic games plans; and what plans they have to improve access for people in Southwark to the games and the cultural festival preceding the games.

**22. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD**

Can we have confirmation that work is under way to plan the future use of Greendale – a presently neglected open space with huge potential for multi activities in South Camberwell?

**23. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR KIRSTY MCNEILL**

Can the executive member outline which decisions on confirming allocations of voluntary sector grants in programmes falling under their portfolio were taken after the beginning of the financial year, this year? Can the executive member confirm when these decisions were initially intended to be taken, and give reasons for the delay?

**24. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR CHRIS PAGE**

When were the applicants to the cultural services grant scheme informed that council officers had submitted a report to the executive member and that they were able to make representations to her in response to that advice? When was that report published? When was the final decision taken?

**25. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER**

Will voluntary groups be compensated for costs associated with delays to grant allocations, including interest, extra administrative costs and loss of users due to uncertainty?

**26. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ABDUL MOHAMMED**

Why is the culture services grant scheme being cut by 52%, can the executive member assure us that there will not be further cuts to the scheme, and that next year's grants be allocated before the start of the financial year?

**27. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD**

Could the executive member please list the totals of all debts and money owed the council that has been written-off since May 2002 on an annual basis by the named executive member, strategic director/chief officer or council committee that authorised the write-off and state an overall total?

**Response By:** Finance Director  
**Response to be Cleared By:** Councillor Toby Eckersley

**28. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND ADULT CARE FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER**

Will the executive member for health and adult care please outline how the council and Southwark primary care trust (PCT) have helped improved community involvement in the monitoring of nursing homes?

**29. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR ADE LASAKI**

How has the executive member for regeneration helped with the development of employment and training opportunities throughout the borough?

**30. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR TIM MCNALLY**

Can the executive member for regeneration outline what services the council have provided to assist with the tackling unemployment?

**31. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL KYRIACOU**

Will the executive member for regeneration provide council assembly details of the current timetable for the regeneration of the Aylesbury estate?

**32. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL**

To ask the executive member for children's services whether the council is aware of any school within the borough that collects the biometric data of pupils, and whether the council has a policy for the collection of such data?

**33. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION FROM COUNCILLOR SANDRA RHULE**

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a duty on local authorities to promote race equality in their policy-making, service delivery and employment. Do all schools in Southwark comply with this Act and if not what is the plan to achieve this?

**34. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER**

Can the executive member outline which decisions on confirming allocations of voluntary sector grants in programs falling under their portfolio were taken after the beginning of the financial year, this year? Can the executive member confirm when these decisions were initially intended to be taken, and give reasons for the delay?

**35. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT SMEATH**

How many young carers are there supporting their family members in Southwark? Can the executive member give assurances that government funding for young carers to be passed to local authorities in the future will continue to be specifically used to support these carers? *(Relates to Guardian article May 10)*

**36. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

Will the executive member for environment to make a statement on the progress of the application for Fairtrade status for the borough?

**37. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES**

Will the executive member for environment to make a statement on the cleanliness of the borough?

**38. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

Can the executive member for the environment please advise when Southwark will deploy its first combined heat and power (CHP) plant and benefit from the dramatic reduction in CO2 emissions?

**39. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES GURLING**

Will the executive member for environment make a statement on the borough's policy on street trees?

**40. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL BAICHO**

Will the executive member for the environment make a statement on the accessible bus stops scheme?

**41. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR JANE SALMON**

Will the executive member for the environment make a statement on the environmental impact of the Burgess Park community sports centre?

**42. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR JENNY JONES**

Nearly a year ago I asked if, during its refurbishment, the East Dulwich Estate could be considered for the installation of solar panels for energy. I was told the matter would be looked into. What was the result and what decisions have been made?

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

How many cars, in an average 100 day period in 2006 would the council normally have clamped or have removed for illegal parking infringements over 100 days? And how many were clamped or removed in the 100 days of change period?

**44. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ANDREW PAKES**

Does the executive member have any plans to contract out the street cleaning arrangements, or does the executive member anticipate any change in management structure when the waste collection service is once again split from the street cleaning service?

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

On July 13 the executive member for environment issue the following a statement:

"We do not intend to introduce a blanket ban on dogs being exercised off the lead in our parks and open spaces. We are, however, committed to tackling the issue of the small minority of dog owners who refuse to control their pets properly to the detriment of other park users. In order to balance the needs of all of our park users, we are considering a number of options including the adoption of dog control orders and the creation of dog exercise areas. Information on the consultation process will be available shortly. In the meantime, we are amending the signage in our parks pending the outcome of the consultation."

This constituted an admission that the existing 1996 Dogs byelaw did not apply to a number of places where signs had been erected prohibiting dog walking before consultation - let alone a decision - on possible dog control orders.

Will the executive member please state:

1. Who took the decision to place the signs;
2. The cost of amending or covering up the signs, as outlined in the statement; and,
3. The estimated cost of any moves to uncover or amend again these signs?

**46. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR SUSAN ELAN JONES**

What are litter pickers expected to clean up and what are street sweepers responsible for cleaning up. Finally, who routinely cleans up dog mess?



**47. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM  
COUNCILLOR AUBYN GRAHAM**

Does the executive members for environment agree with me that it is unacceptable to have a situation whereby bereaved families or the funeral directors has to carry the coffins of loved ones on their shoulders for over 50 metres to reach the graveside in Camberwell New Cemetery?