

<b>Item No.</b> 5.3	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 28th April 2004	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Motions – March 2004	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Chief Executive (Borough Solicitor & Secretary)	

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.9, the Member moving the motion may make a speech directed to the matter under discussion. (This may not exceed five minutes without the consent of the Mayor).

The seconder will then be asked by the Mayor to second the motion. (This may not exceed three minutes without the consent of the Mayor).

The meeting will then open up to debate on the issue and any amendments on the motion will be dealt with.

At the end of the debate the mover of the motion may exercise a right of reply. If an amendment is carried, the mover of the amendment shall hold the right of reply to any subsequent amendments and, if no further amendments are carried, at the conclusion of the debate on the substantive motion.

The Mayor will then ask Members to vote on the motion (and any amendments).

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The constitution allocates particular responsibility for functions to Council Assembly, for approving the budget and policy framework, and to the Executive, for developing and implementing the budget and policy framework and overseeing the running of Council services on a day-to-day basis. Therefore any matters reserved to Executive (i.e. housing, social services, regeneration, environment, education etc) can not be decided upon by Council Assembly without prior reference to the Executive. While it would be in order for Council Assembly to discuss an issue, consideration of any of the following should be referred to the Executive:

- To change or develop a new or existing policy
- To instruct officers to implement new procedures
- To allocate resources

**(NOTE:** In accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.9 (5) & (6) (Prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the motions have been prioritised by the Chief Whips).

1. **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN O'BRIEN** (seconded by Councillor Jane Salmon)

**Please note that in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.9 (3), this motion shall be considered by Council Assembly.**

That Council notes this year's below-inflation council tax rise of just 2.4% (3.5% including the Mayor's precept) and notes with particular interest that:

- This rise is the second lowest in London this year;
- This rise is half the national average;
- In its first two budgets the Executive has introduced a total rise of only 12.69% - by far the lowest in London, with the average being 25.23%;
- Southwark's council tax is now the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest in London, down from 17<sup>th</sup> under the previous administration;

Council further notes that, despite a very low council tax increase, the Council's CPA rating has moved from 'weak' to 'fair' and Southwark residents are getting more value for money than ever.

Council therefore applauds the administration for this year's budget.

Council also registers its concern, however, at the impact of a regressive and generally expensive tax that sees the poorest 20% of society paying 42% of their income that is detrimental to the lives of too many people within this borough.

Council thereby calls on the government to give serious consideration to the introduction of a local income tax, recently described "a realistic option" by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (4/03/04) as an alternative and fair means of local taxation, to enable Southwark Council to continue its improvement of performance funded by fair and progressive means for all.

**AMENDMENT A**

Moved: Councillor Sarah Welfare  
Seconded: Councillor Mark Glover

**Delete all after second bullet point and insert:**

Council further notes that:

- This is due to the government's increase in the formula grant of 5.9% this year (bringing the total £329.6 million) and a further cash injection to Southwark of £4.859 million;
- government grants to local government has increased by 29% in real terms since 1997 compared with a 7% cut over the last four years of the previous government;
- the alternative budget proposed by the Majority Opposition Group would have resulted in a 1.9% council tax rise without cuts to key services and the voluntary sector.

Council, however, wishes to register its aspiration to see increased accountability and fairness in local taxation. It therefore welcomes:

- the Budget announcement of a £100 payment to pensioner households with someone aged 70 or over to assist with their council tax bills; and
- the Government's Balance of Funding Review, that is examining all the options for reform and will report this summer.

**2. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BRADBURY** (seconded by Councillor Kim Humphreys)

**Please note that in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.9 (3), this motion shall be considered by Council Assembly.**

This Council does not believe that the use of Compulsory Purchase Order Powers is the best approach to finding a site for a new school in East Dulwich.

**AMENDMENT A**

**Moved:** Councillor Andy Simmons  
**Seconded:** Councillor Robert Smeath

**Delete all and replace by**

This Council

(a) Notes the possible future use of Compulsory Purchase Order Powers in the Canada Water area in order to facilitate a new school.

(b) Opposes the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers for residential properties, small and medium businesses, Metropolitan Open Land and parks in the East Dulwich and Nunhead area to provide a new school.

Believes that there may still be circumstances under which Compulsory Purchase Powers would be beneficial and agrees not to rule them out at this time.

**COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & CULTURE**

The current proposals for increasing secondary school provision in the East Dulwich and Nunhead area are based on the use of existing sites. There is no proposal to extend either the Homestall Road site of Waverley School or the old lower school site on Peckham Rye through the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

**3. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL BATES** (seconded by Councillor Fiona Colley)

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an amendment and an officer comment.**

Council notes the appointment of Barratt as preferred developer for the Downtown area regeneration scheme.

Council further notes the significant disquiet in the local community regarding the proposed plans - including a public meeting held by the Downtown Defence Campaign on 20<sup>th</sup> January at which over 100 local people attended.

Council believes that communication from the council to local residents with regard to the regeneration scheme has been inadequate. Consequently, residents in the immediate Downtown area feel uninvolved in the process of development and poorly consulted about plans which they believe are not in keeping with the locality. Council further believes that the Executive Member for Regeneration has a role to play in communicating the council's vision to the residents of Downtown, but as yet, has not done so.

Council calls on the Executive Member for Regeneration to attend a future public meeting - independent of the council - to discuss the Downtown development. At that meeting, the Executive Member should listen and respond to the concerns of local people and frame adequate policies to ensure the scheme better reflects local priorities.

#### **AMENDMENT A**

**Moved:** Councillor Catherine Bowman

**Seconded:** Councillor Lisa Rajan

#### **Delete all after paragraph 1 and insert:**

Council notes that this regeneration scheme was begun under the previous administration and that the scheme caused significant disquiet in the local community.

Council believes that council communication to local residents with regard to this regeneration is very important.

Council notes that consultation under the previous administration was woeful and that the new administration has taken conscious steps to improve consultation by, for example, introducing a series of mail drops – the last one on 16 December 2003 – and public exhibitions on-site.

Council notes that, as a result of representations from residents and local councillors, the housing density of the Downtown development has been considerably reduced.

Council notes that that the Barratt application is due to be considered by Planning Committee and that members will be able to approve, seek modification of or refuse the application in the normal way.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION**

The Council's Executive selected Barratt as the preferred developer for the Downtown site and gave the Director of Regeneration and Borough Solicitor delegated authority to finalise legal terms and enter into contract with Barratt. Contracts were exchanged in January 2004. Barratt are now required to make a planning application in line with the scheme that was taken through public consultation, public exhibition and Executive.

Southwark Development Control will be acting under their statutory responsibility in examining and discussing Barratt's proposals and making their recommendation to

Planning Committee where elected Councillors will make the decision on the application. Planning Committee will be able to approve, seek modification of or refuse the application in the normal way.

The Barratt proposal is supported by the Primary Care Trust and the medical practices who operate from the current health centre. The new enlarged and improved health facility is much needed. The School Governors of Redriff Primary School which adjoins the site support the development.

Downtown has been identified for many years as a regeneration site in the existing UDP. It has been declared surplus to the Council's requirements and is categorised as a brownfield site.

The process of bringing forward development of this site was started over two years ago. Two public meetings were held at the Downtown tenants' hall. These meetings were the most hostile that officers had ever attended. As a result residents were asked to elect a panel of representatives and eight people stood for election. It was decided that all eight candidates who stood for election should form the Downtown Assessment Advisory Panel.

The Downtown Assessment Advisory Panel was established as the forum for consultation and met regularly over the course of a year to examine and influence the proposals from the developers. Local ward members also took part in the process.

A series of mail drops to over 2,000 local residents within half a kilometre of the site have been carried out to keep them informed and to invite them to the public exhibitions taking place over 4 days at the site and at Rotherhithe Community Council. These were well attended and the results of the panel and public exhibition consultation are available in the Executive report. The last maildrop to residents updating them of progress was sent on 16th December 2003.

The members of the Downtown Defence Corps/Campaign attended the exhibitions and have made their comments well known. The secretary of this group was an active member of the Downtown Assessment Advisory Panel.

The advisory panel achieved much including encouraging the proposed new housing density designation to be reduced to urban from inner urban. The guidance to developers of not more than 500 habitable rooms per hectare is less than half what can be achieved at inner urban densities and Barratt's proposed densities are at the bottom of the urban range. They are in fact only just outside the suburban range of density.

During the consultation process the heights and densities of the scheme were reduced and as a result of the panel's comments on design a leading firm of architects has been engaged by Barratt. A new health centre and new community centre were secured. The grass verges on Salter and Downtown Road are to be kept and maintained by the Council. An environmental impact statement is to be carried out on the site and substantial developer contributions towards local facilities including the community centre, Russia Dock Woodland and Redriff School will be made.

Barratt will be carrying out further pre-planning public consultation on their proposals, arranging public workshops to go through the design process and to consult on the

new community centre and facilities that they are obliged to provide within the scheme. There is therefore further scope for public influence to change the scheme.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

**4. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD THOMAS** (seconded by Councillor Caroline Pidgeon)

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an amendment and an officer comment.**

Council notes with outrage Transport for London's (TfL) proposal to re-route the P13 bus from Streatham to New Cross.

Council notes further the incredibly narrow timeframe (just 4 weeks) for consultation with users on this change and that, given the proposal will be put out to tender in February, the Mayor clearly has no intention of listening to users views.

Council agrees that the P13 is a popular bus route that:

- Provides easy access to Surrey Quays shopping centre;
- Provides an important integrated transport link with the East London Line(Surrey Quays) and London Underground at Canada Water;
- Serves housing estates in South Bermondsey that would otherwise have no access to bus transport.

Council further agrees that TfL's plan to extend the P12 to Surrey Quays is inadequate because passengers going all the way to Surrey Quays on the current P13 will now have to change buses to complete their journey.

Council considers the proposal is an ideal opportunity to address the need to re-route the P13 in the East Dulwich area.

Council calls on TfL to extend the consultation period, as per the Executive Member for Environment and Transport's previous request and undertake to offer proper consultation in the future.

**AMENDMENT A**

Moved: Councillor Barrie Hargrove  
Seconded: Councillor Aubyn Graham

First paragraph - **delete** "with outrage".

Second paragraph –

(1) **delete** "further the incredibly narrow timeframe (just 4 weeks) for consultation with users on this change and that" and **replace** with "it was first made aware of these plans in October 2003 and that",

(2) **delete** "given",

(3) after February **add** "and that the service change is planned to come into effect in October 2004"

(4) **delete** "the Mayor clearly has no intention of listening to users views".

Third paragraph –

(i) after Surrey Quays **insert** "and Peckham" shopping centre's".

(ii) After link **replace** "with the East London Line (Surrey Quays) and London Underground at Canada Water" **with** "throughout Southwark stretching from West Dulwich in the south to Canada Water in the north".

Fourth paragraph –

(a) **replace** "further agrees that" **with** "notes with interest",

(b) **replace** " to Surrey Quays" **with** "in both directions between Nunhead and Surrey Quays".

(c) **Delete** "is inadequate because passengers going all the way to Surrey Quays on the current P13 will now have to change buses to complete their journey" and **replace** with new sentence "Council also notes that some passengers going all the way to Surrey Quays on the current P13 may be inconvenienced if they have to change buses to complete their journey".

(d) **add** new sentence, "For these reasons, Council resolves to carry out a user impact study of the effects of diverting the P13 route to New Cross and extending the P12 through East Peckham, Bermondsey and on to Surrey Quays."

Fifth paragraph –

between "address" and "the need", **insert** "in partnership". **Delete** " East Dulwich area" and **replace** with " the Grove Hill/Bromar/ Malfort/ Putchley Road area.

Six paragraph - **delete all**.

#### **MOTION AS AMENDED SHOULD THEREFORE READ:**

Council notes TfL's proposal to re-route the P13 bus from Streatham to New Cross.

Council notes that it was first made aware of these plans in October 2003 and that the proposal will be put out to tender in February and that the service change is planned to come into effect in October 2004.

Council agrees that the P13 is a popular bus route that:

- Provides easy access to Surrey Quays and Peckham shopping centres;
- Provides an important integrated transport link throughout Southwark stretching from West Dulwich in the south to Canada Water in the north;
- Serves Housing Estates in South Bermondsey that would otherwise have no access to bus transport.

Council notes with interest TfL's plan to extend the P12 in both directions between Nunhead and Surrey Quays. Council also notes that some passengers going all the way to Surrey Quays on the current P13 may be inconvenienced if they have to change buses to complete their journey. For these reasons, Council resolves to carry out a user impact study of the effects of diverting the P13 route to New Cross and extending the P12 through East Peckham, Bermondsey and on to Surrey Quays.

Council considers the proposal is an ideal opportunity to address in partnership the need to re-route the P13 in the Grove Hill/Bromar/Melfort/Putchley Road area

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION**

The Council has formally written to Transport for London outlining a number of concerns regarding London Buses' routing proposals for the P13 in the north of the borough. The Council has requested both an extended consultation period and meeting to discuss the proposals further. To date no official response has been received, acknowledging the matters raised in the letter.

London Buses is due to chair a meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2004 to discuss issues regarding the P13 route in the Grove Hill Road / Bromar Road area. They have confirmed that time will be available to discuss concerns relating to other sections of the route within Southwark. Details of the meeting will be forwarded to relevant Ward Councillors so that they may have the opportunity to attend and voice their concerns.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

#### **5. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR KIM HUMPHREYS (seconded by Councillor Toby Eckersley)**

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an amendment and an officer comment.**

That this Council notes the proposed European Constitution being prepared by the European Convention will have huge implications for Southwark Council. The Constitution will give the European Union "shared competence" over home affairs, transport, energy, social policy, economic and social cohesion, consumer protection and the environment, meaning overall more legislation and guidance binding on local government will be decided at a European rather than a national level.

That given the Government has used referendums to approve other constitutional change affecting local and national government, including establishing regional assemblies and directly-elected mayors, this Council believes that the people of Southwark should be able to have their say on these constitutional changes in a referendum.

This Council therefore resolves to make a formal written submission to the Prime Minister, supporting calls for a national referendum on the proposed European Constitution.



## AMENDMENT A

Moved: Councillor Mark Pursey  
Seconded: Councillor Catherine Bowman

First paragraph:

- **Delete** 'being prepared by the European Convention' **and insert** 'if agreed by the EU Summit'
- **Replace** 'will' with 'may' in both instances
- **Replace** 'meaning' with 'could mean that'
- After 'level' **add** 'and that local regional and national government may have more say in issues currently decided at European level.'

Second paragraph:

After 'their say on' **replace** 'these' with 'any major'

Third paragraph:

### **Delete all and insert:**

This Council therefore request the Chief Executive to make a formal written submission to the Prime Minister, supporting calls for a national referendum on the proposed European Constitution if the outcome of the EU Summit involves major constitutional changes.

## COMMENTS FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Members will be aware that December's EU Summit in Brussels failed to reach a consensus on the proposed European Constitution. There was deadlock over a number of issues, but most significantly over the weighting of Member States' votes in the Council of Ministers.

The Irish Presidency of the EU is now responsible for progressing talks on the draft Constitution.

The proposed European Constitution was drawn up by a Convention which had been working over the past 18 months, composed of Ministers, backbench MPs, and MEPs from the 25 current and future EU member states. It was chaired by former French President Valery Giscard-D'Estaing.

The draft text was formally presented to the EU Summit in Thessaloniki in June 2003, which agreed that an agreement should be reached in time for the outcome to be known before the next European Parliament elections in June 2004. Given the deadlock in December, the Irish presidency has refused to put a new time span on the negotiations.

Like all the previous EU treaties (Single European Act 1986, Maastricht 1991, and Amsterdam 1997) each EU member state will then have to ratify it in any new Constitution. Some countries normally do this by a referendum; others including the UK have always done it by an Act of Parliament.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

**6. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD** (seconded by Councillor Peter John)

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an amendment and an officer comment.**

Council notes:

1. That an electrical fire occurred at Riseholme House, East Dulwich Estate on the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004, which caused the evacuation of the block;
2. That arrangements for dealing with the consequences of the fire, including the provision of food and temporary shelter and the provision of alternative accommodation for those residents evacuated from Riseholme House appeared to be inadequate and ad hoc.

Council notes with concern that there appeared to be no clear emergency procedures in place to deal with such an incident.

Council Assembly calls upon the Executive to urgently review emergency procedures to deal with incidents such as the Riseholme House fire, such a review to include consideration of establishing a permanent emergency team and protocol, and to bring a full report back to the April Council Assembly.

**AMEMDMENT A**

**Moved:** Councillor Beverley Bassom  
**Seconded:** Councillor Graham Neale

**Delete** all after 'consequences of the fire' and **insert:**

'were well-managed insofar as such events cannot be pre-planned to the point where inconvenience is eliminated and all uncertainty removed.

Council notes however, that similar emergency instances have not been so well-handled in the past and has been discussed at the last two Housing Scrutiny meetings.

**COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**

A fire occurred within the electrical intake cupboard to Riseholme House, East Dulwich Estate on the 14th January 2004. A report is still awaited from the London Fire Service but it is understood to have been caused by a fault to the electrical mains supply (owned by Electricite de France - formerly London Electricity) igniting within the cupboard.

The Council has emergency plans in place to respond to unplanned events that impact on residents and services within its boundaries. The Borough wide emergency plan involves major incidents such as terrorist incidents, a breakdown of services across large parts of the borough etc. This incident related to a single residential block of dwellings owned by the Council and was therefore treated as a local emergency incident. In the event of emergencies such as this the Council relies

on local housing staff to provide a response. In such situations neighbourhood housing staff are called out to manage the incident. The Council does not employ a dedicated workforce specifically for this type of event. In this case the Neighbourhood Manager successfully organised staff to attend site to provide an initial assessment of the incident and the resources required.

The fire resulted in the loss of all electrical power to the block and the residents had to be evacuated from the building until the power to the block had been isolated. Once the initial assessment had been provided the neighbourhood implemented an emergency response in accordance with its local plan. This in summary included:

- Securing the availability of the local community centre for those evacuated. This allowed an immediate albeit short-term solution to the evacuation.
- The organisation of a forward command post to allow direct liaison with Fire Service and EDF on the action to be taken.
- Informing ward councillors of the incident
- Organising the provision of food.
- The provision of emergency supplies of blankets and other equipment.
- Identifying and securing temporary accommodation to those households who had no alternative arrangements available to them.
- The provision of security services to patrol the block to minimise the risk of burglaries to the evacuated homes.
- Keeping residents informed of progress immediately after the evacuation and until the building could be re-occupied and the electrical supply reconnected.

The management of this incident or any emergency event is not a straightforward or predictable process. Such events cannot be pre-planned to the point where inconvenience is eliminated and all uncertainty removed. The response time of the Housing staff was almost immediate in attending the emergency and the officer in charge remained in attendance until 1am the following morning.

A Senior Officer review of the sequence of events confirms that almost without exception all key tasks were identified and actioned by officers. Subsequently, officers have attended two Housing Scrutiny meetings to analyse the events surrounding this incident and the recommendations from Housing Scrutiny are noted elsewhere in this motion.

Any lessons learnt from this and previous incidents are incorporated into Neighbourhood and Departmental emergency plans to ensure they are as robust as possible.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

**7. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN** (seconded by Councillor Stephen Flannery)

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an officer comment.**

Council notes with dismay that the Higher Education Bill will progress to Committee Stage thanks to the Government's five-vote Commons win.

Council notes that the Bill, with its provision for top-up fees, is a breach of the Government's manifesto.

Council considers the Government's plans to be a 'poll tax on learning' that will burden students with mortgage style debts of up to £33,000, which many students will still be paying back when they retire. This makes a mockery of the Government's claim to be widening opportunities.

Council notes that up-front tuition fees for Scottish students at Scottish universities have long been scrapped.

Council believes that to invest in our country's future we must invest in our young people.

Council calls on the Government to ditch its plans for top-up fees since they would mean that many of Southwark's brightest students would no longer be able to afford a university education and/or at the university of their choice.

Council calls on the Leader to write to Southwark's three MPs calling on them to oppose the Government's proposals at every opportunity.

## **COMMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & CULTURE**

### **Future Arrangements for Student Tuition Fees for Higher Education**

The proposals for 2004 and 2005 apply to England and Wales and the proposals for 2006 apply to England only.

#### **Changes from September 2004**

- The maximum tuition fee contribution a full time undergraduate will have to pay will increase from £1,125 to £1,150.
- New students from lower income families starting in 2004/05 will be eligible for a new Higher Education Grant worth up to £1,000 a year. Students with a family income of £15,200 or less will get the full grant of £1,000, whereas those with income between £15,201 and £21,185 will qualify for a partial grant.
- Income of the natural parent's spouse (husband or wife) or cohabiting partner (partner they live with) will be assessed for new students starting in 2004/2005.
- A new single family-income threshold will be introduced together with a new £10,000 income threshold for single independent students.
- Part-time students will have a means-tested fee support of up to £575 and a grant of up to £250 towards books, travel and other course costs.

#### **Changes from 2005**

- The repayment threshold at which all student loans start to be paid back will be £15,000 from April 2005. This applies to all students with income contingent loans – including those currently in repayment.

#### **Changes from 2006**

- HE grant is to be combined with the existing fee remission grant (expected to be around £1,200 in 2006/07) to make a single combined grant of £2,700.
- Some of the combined grant will be offset against the maintenance loan. Effectively this means that part of the combined grant is in addition to maintenance loan and part of it is in substitution for maintenance loan.
- There will be £300 bursary from universities charging £3,000 to the 30% of students from lower income backgrounds.
- There will be a total non repayable financial grant of £3,000, in addition to a loan for maintenance and a loan for fees.
- The maximum rate of the student maintenance loan will increase to match the student expenditure from 2006. The biggest increase will be in London. The loans will continue to be means tested as now for those from higher family income backgrounds.
- Universities will be able to vary fees from £0 to £3,000 per year, set for the whole of the next Parliament. This will affect new starters from 2006. Universities would only be permitted to raise fees above the standard rate (currently £1,125) and up to £3,000 if they signed up to an Access Agreement with the new Office for Fair Access (OFFA).
- The requirement to pay fees up front would be abolished for all full-time undergraduate students from 2006.
- For students commencing studies in 2006 all loan balances left unpaid 25 years after leaving the course will be written-off .

**8. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN FRIARY** (seconded by Councillor Andy Simmons)

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an amendment and an officer comment.**

Council Assembly

(1) Notes the decision of the Executive on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2003 to dispense with the Parks Ranger service.

(2) Notes that this decision was made without due consultation and in the face of borough-wide concerns from Friends of Parks groups.

(3) Notes the continued high satisfaction ratings given by Southwark residents of the Parks Service MORI polls, opposes current Executive plans to end the Park Rangers service and therefore calls on the Executive to revisit their decision of the 16<sup>th</sup> December.

(4) Further notes that this is one of a series of recent decisions made by the Executive where relevant stakeholders have been unhappy with the degree of consultation.

(5) Calls for a Scrutiny investigation to look at the processes and factors leading to reports appearing before the Executive without adequate consultation.

#### **AMENDMENT A**

**Moved:** Councillor Richard Thomas

**Seconded:** Councillor Richard Porter

#### **Delete all and insert:**

Council Assembly

Welcomes the continued high public satisfaction ratings for parks shown in MORI polls.

Notes the Executive report of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2003 which highlighted ongoing public concerns about the following issues:

- Lack of 'presence' and enforcement
- Dogs and dog mess
- Graffiti and vandalism

Notes:

- The need for an ecology officer to take forward the nature conservation agenda in parks.
- The proposal to reinstate the previously cut community development and outreach team in order to enhance support to the community.
- The desire to create local management and ownership of parks.
- The need to tackle a growing amount of anti social behaviour and vandalism - recent examples being Southwark Park, Russia Dock Woodland, Peckham Rye and Goose Green

Welcomes the decision of the Executive on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2003 to create a new Parks Wardens service.

Notes the decision of the Executive on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, which asked Overview & Scrutiny Committee to look into the consultation process and agrees:-

1. That all the recommendations of Education, Youth & Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee be noted.
2. That the Executive further notes the concerns about the adequacy of consultation with stakeholders with regard to decisions made by the Executive.
3. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee be requested to investigate the consultation processes and factors surrounding Executive reports.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE**

The decision taken on 16th December agreed to create community wardens for parks but also initiated a consultation process to help shape this new service. This

consultation with all relevant stakeholders (including friends of parks) is currently taking place and the results will be incorporated in the design of the new parks service.

The proposals arise, however, in recognition of a number of factors which have come to light in surveys and in dialogue with park users. Satisfaction with the Parks Service is high but there are also continuing public concerns about anti-social behaviour, visibility of staff and safety (both real and perceived). The purpose of creating a parks division of the community warden service is to try and address these concerns, effectively, with a properly trained service who can develop a relationship with all users of parks and use enforcement powers in the last resort. This service will benefit from support and training from the Community Warden Service, which is both popular and growing.

The service will report on a day-to-day basis to the manager in each Major Park and will be complemented by a newly created Outreach Team and Ecology Officer who will lead on education and biodiversity issues.

It is expected that a good number of staff who currently work within the ranger service will apply for positions within the new service (retaining valuable experience and local knowledge) and arrangements are being made to facilitate this process. The purpose is to address the outstanding concerns of park users and make Southwark's Parks safer, cleaner and even more popular than they currently are.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

**9. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR CAROLINE PIDGEON** (seconded by Councillor David Hubber)

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an amendment and an officer comment.**

Council notes the Mayor of London's proposals for five 'super boroughs'.

Council condemns such proposals and agrees that super boroughs would:

- Dilute any sense of local identity that already exists in a city like London;
- Be very costly to establish given the massive re-organisation that would be required.

Council agrees that there should be more devolution of power - not less - and that such devolution to community councils has proved successful in Southwark.

Council resolves to write to the Mayor of London asking him to ditch his proposals immediately.

**AMENDMENT A**

Moved: Councillor Andy Simmons  
Seconded: Councillor John Friary

**Delete all and insert:-**

Council notes the GLA's review of local government organisation in London and the Mayor of London's comments on the possibility of five 'super Boroughs'.

Council believes that local government organisation should place the needs of local residents firmly at its heart.

Council notes and welcomes the government's support for decision making at the local level.

Council notes the new powers and flexibilities offered to local authorities and the potential for serving residents more effectively by joint working. For example joint services between the existing boroughs offer great potential for better serving local residents.

Council in particular notes the potential for joint work between Southwark and Lambeth in the Herne Hill and Camberwell areas.

Council notes the substantial savings that a move to super-Boroughs could provide in terms of Executive allowances and officer salaries but rejects the 'super-Borough' approach as this has not been shown to put local residents at its heart.

Council supports the development of local decision making but asks the Finance and Economic Development Scrutiny Sub-Committee to receive a report on the cost-effectiveness of the current Community Councils and how substantial savings could be made from the current £1 million cost as part of the 2004/05 budget setting process.

Council asks the Chief Executive to write to the chair of the GLA panel and the Mayor for London to express these views.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

At its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> September, the London Assembly's Business Management and Appointments Committee considered a report on 'Local Governance in London'. The Committee agreed to make recommendations to the Assembly in respect of the proposed establishment of an Inquiry into London's Local Governance. The report can be viewed on the GLA website at:

[www.london.gov.uk/assembly/appsmtgs/2003/bmacsep10/bmacsep10item14.rtf](http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/appsmtgs/2003/bmacsep10/bmacsep10item14.rtf)

On 15<sup>th</sup> October the London Assembly agreed in principle to conduct an inquiry into local governance in the context of London's public sector as a whole on the basis of the following preliminary framework and on the understanding that detailed terms of reference would be developed and refined in due course:

- I. to consider electoral systems and governance arrangements;
- II. to consider patterns of commissioning and provision that will best achieve the effective and economic delivery of public services to the community including options for local authority consortia;
- III. to consider the availability of resources for these services from all sources including existing and possible new funding streams;



- IV. to consider relationships with other public sector agencies, including the Government Office for London and the quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations in London, and co-terminosity of their areas; and
- V. to consider local authority boundaries, their areas of interest and means for councils/councillors to engage more effectively with local communities.

It was further agreed that:

- Consideration of the constitutional arrangements be deferred to allow further exploration with the Association of London Government (ALG) of the opportunities for joint working on the basis that the inquiry would –
  - a) from the outset, admit an open agenda, with no individual right to veto options for consideration, and
  - b) aim to produce a range of options for wider public debate and further consideration ;
- The Assembly request Len Duvall to lead the discussions with the ALG on behalf of the Assembly, with a view to his appointment as Chair of the inquiry, and report back on progress to the Business Management and Appointments Committee and, to the Assembly, with detailed proposals for the structure and terms of reference of the inquiry;
- The Assembly authorise preliminary work to prepare for the inquiry, including identifying and accessing relevant data that already exists, and commissioning appropriate research and other work to put together a suitable base of material for the inquiry to progress to further phases of assessing and filtering the data, and identifying key issues and questions at the earliest stage, as a prelude to evidence sessions;
- For the purposes indicated in paragraph V above, expenditure be authorised up to an initial limit of £30,000, as necessary by virement within the existing Assembly and Secretariat budgets; GLA officers be asked to explore other sources of funding for both 2003/04 and 2004/05; and appropriate provision be made for the project in the scrutiny programme budget.

The inquiry is anticipated to take 18 months to complete and is currently at the first stage. In this initial stage, Londoners are being invited to submit their views on a variety of topics. Suggested topics are given on the website, and can be viewed at:

[http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/local\\_governance.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/local_governance.jsp)

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

**10. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR BARRIE HARGROVE** (seconded by Councillor Sarah Welfare)

**Please note that in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.9 (3), this motion shall be considered by Council Assembly.**

This Council strongly supports the Street Leaders initiative, but is concerned that its current operations appear to be insufficiently publicised. This Council Assembly therefore requests that the Executive ensure a presentation is made to each community council setting out the successes as well as shortcomings in the Street Leaders' scheme. Each presentation shall contain specific local reference data for each individual community council's consideration.

#### **COMMENT FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE**

Street leader schemes have been shown to be an effective way of harnessing people's concern to improve the quality of services delivered by the Council, therefore, in December 2002, the Environment and Leisure Department applied for funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund to support the establishment of a pilot 'Street Leader' scheme in the five priority Neighbourhoods.

The focus of the street leader scheme was to increase the involvement of local people in service delivery and improvement. The ideology was that by recruiting local people to report on and monitor their environment, while at the same time giving them better information on how services can be delivered; there would be increased involvement in the delivery of their services.

In the first instance street leader recruitment was targeted at those already active in the community in the five priority neighbourhoods - neighbourhood watch co-ordinators and those who regularly contacted the council about environmental issues. Due to the ring-fenced nature of the funding, publicity was limited to attract residents from these areas alone in the first instance. However, it should be noted that a campaign was undertaken, with presentations at Neighbourhood Forums and TNRA meetings, and adverts appearing in the following publications:-

- Housing Neighbourhood Newsletters
- 'In House'
- Environment and Leisure Newsletter 'Envision'
- Southwark Life
- Staff Voice
- The South London Press
- Southwark News
- The Eastern Eye
- The Caribbean Times
- The India Weekly
- The New Nation
- The Asian Times
- The African Times

A launch conference was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2003 and a further Conference was held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2004, to discuss the successes of the first year and to identify from street leaders themselves the areas for improvement for the scheme.

As a result of the great demand from residents to join the scheme; and the success of the current operations, additional revenue has now been identified for the 2004/5 year in order to expand the scheme Borough wide from April 2004. Officers are now preparing publicity materials and events in order to attract more residents to become street leaders. Part of this publicity campaign will be an offer of a presentation to all Community Councils. This presentation will include details of how to become a street leader, how the scheme works, improvement ideas and what are perceived to be the environmental challenges in each of the eight Community Council areas.

## **Timetable for expansion**

Presentations to Community Councils by E&L officers - from April 2004  
Adverts in local press to attract applicants - April 2004  
IT system and back office procedure improvements - from April 2004  
'Improvement Plan' recommendations implemented - from April 2004  
Retraining of Council Officers about scheme improvements- from April 2004  
Meetings held to discuss scheme and sign up new residents - June 2004  
Training of new Streetleaders - July / Aug 2004  
Meetings set up with E&L Managers to discuss the workings of the Department - July / Aug 2004  
Call Centre visit - July / Aug 2004

### **11. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR AUBYN GRAHAM (seconded by Councillor Alison Moise)**

**Please note that in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.9 (3), this motion shall be considered by Council Assembly.**

This Council Assembly requests that the Executive consider that Southwark Council re- affiliate to the National Association of Black, Asian and Ethnic minority councillors (NABAEMC).

#### **COMMENT FROM THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (PERFORMANCE & STRATEGY)**

NABAEMC is a national organisation of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Councillors. Southwark was an affiliate member until two years ago. It is not clear why Southwark's membership lapsed.

The purpose of the Association is to support black and ethnic minority councillors and to lobby the main political parties to ensure that selection for and election to public positions reflect the diversity of society.

The Association has a number of members, both nationally and in London. Within London members include Greenwich, Lewisham, Brent, Newham, Croydon, Hackney and Enfield. Membership outside London includes Watford, Cambridge, Sheffield, Manchester, Sandwell, Gloucester, Warwick and, imminently, Birmingham.

Membership costs approximately £25 per individual Member, but a flat rate in the region of £90 applies if more than 5 members join from one authority.

The organisation is non-party political: the Chair can be elected from any one party, and there are three vice-Chairs, one each from the 3 main parties.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

### **12. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD (seconded by Councillor Michelle Pearce)**

**This motion is referred to this meeting for consideration from Council Assembly on 18th February 2004, in accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 1.13(6). The motion is reproduced below, together with an amendment and an officer comment.**

This Council calls upon the Executive to ensure that the Greendale path and cycle way are put onto a regular environmental maintenance programme so that litter, abandoned cars and graffiti are regularly and promptly removed, and the footpath kept clear of nettles and brambles.

Council also requests the Executive to secure a report within the next six months which makes recommendations on options for the long term future of Greendale with the aim of restoring the open spaces in Council ownership to public or community use.

Council further requests that the views of local community groups and tenant/resident associations are taken into consideration in the report and that the report be submitted to the Camberwell and Dulwich Community Councils for comment before final decisions are taken by the Executive.

#### **AMENDMENT A**

Moved: Councillor Nick Stanton  
Seconded: Councillor Richard Thomas

**After 'Council' delete 'also' and insert:**

“regrets the decision of the previous administration to sell off Greendale subject to planning permission and therefore .....

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE**

The Greendale Path and Cycle Way are cleaned by Southwark Cleaning twice per week. However, access difficulties associated with the physical layout has meant the cleaning has not been as thorough as we would like.

A 'deep clean' of the area has been organised which will encompass litter, graffiti and weed encroachment. As a result local residents should see a marked improvement in the general appearance of the site. The cleaning arrangements currently in place for the area should be sufficient to maintain the improvements.

Weekly checks on the area for abandoned vehicles are taking place and should again make a marked difference to the problem and improve the general 'feel' of the area.

It is recognised that Greendale is a potentially valuable community resource which has been run-down for decades. The lease agreement struck in the 1990's with Dulwich Hamlets FC made no adequate provision for improvement and development of the site as a community sports facility. Recent failed plans at redevelopment have meant that there has been a long period of uncertainty and the condition of the site has deteriorated further to a very bad level. Officers have had exploratory talks with Dulwich Hamlets FC and consultative meetings with other potential stakeholders. These will continue in order for officers to produce a report which proposes options for return of the site for community sporting and recreational purposes.

The Environmental Services and Regeneration Departments will produce a report within the next six months setting out the options for long term solutions to the problems associated with this area that will allow the local community to use and enjoy this open space. Such a report will, of course, seek the views of local people and this consultation will include both Camberwell and Dulwich Community Councils.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Member Motions	Town Hall Peckham Road London SE5 8UB	Constitutional Team 020 7525 7228

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Team Manager
<b>Report Author</b>	Kevin Flaherty, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	16th April 2004