

Item No. 6.2	Classification: Open	Date: July 20 2005	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Report back on motions referred to executive from council assembly	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Executive	

MOTION FROM MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 3.9 – LEASEHOLD VALUATION TRIBUNAL DECISION REGARDING MAJOR WORKS SCHEMES

Executive on April 5 2005 considered the following motion referred from council assembly on February 23 2005, which had been moved by Councillor William Rowe, and seconded by Councillor Toby Eckersley:-

That council assembly notes the decision of the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal in respect of the Brandon estate and leaseholders' continuing unhappiness with the way in which they are consulted on major works schemes and requests the executive to instruct officers to bring an urgent report to overview & scrutiny committee on:

- Reasons why the Council lost this particular case
- Actions to be taken to ensure that the Council only incurs costs in respect of leasehold properties when it is reasonable for those costs to be recharged to leaseholders
- How each of the following areas can be improved in relation to major works contracts for the benefit of both leaseholders and the housing revenue account (HRA):
 - (i) consultation with leaseholders
 - (ii) purchasing procedures to achieve better prices
 - (iii) supervision of contractors to ensure work is completed satisfactorily
 - (iv) timing of issue of invoices

The above motion was slightly amended and approved as set out:-

1. That the decision of the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal in respect of the Brandon estate and leaseholders' continuing unhappiness with the way in which they were consulted on major works schemes be noted and officers be instructed to bring a report to overview & scrutiny committee and then onto executive in the summer 2005 on:
 - Reasons why the council lost this particular case
 - Actions to be taken to ensure that the Council only incurs costs in respect of leasehold properties when it is reasonable for those costs to be recharged to leaseholders
 - Options for providing a breakdown of revenue service charges
 - How each of the following areas can be improved in relation to major works contracts for the benefit of both leaseholders and the housing revenue account (HRA):
 - (i) consultation with leaseholders
 - (ii) improvements to procurement process including economies of scale and value for money
 - (iii) supervision of contractors to ensure work is completed satisfactorily
 - (iv) timing of issue of invoices

MOTION FROM MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 3.9 - REDUCTION IN WATER PRESSURE IN SOUTHWARK

Executive on April 5 2005 considered the following motion referred from council assembly on February 23 2005 which had been moved by Councillor Graham Neale and seconded by Councillor Jeff Hook:-

1. That council assembly notes with alarm Thames Water's plan to reduce water pressure in a number of areas across London, including Southwark, during the next five years, with work expected to start in some places this spring.
2. That council further notes that this reduction in pressure will necessitate the use of new pumps in some buildings - including flats, schools and hospitals – to get water up to higher floors.
3. That council is concerned that many council tower blocks in Southwark are likely to be affected and that the council looks set to bear the cost for new pumps. Residents living on the second floor or above who rely on a combination boiler will also need to fit costly alternatives.
4. That council is appalled at Thames Water's failure to:
 - Face up to their responsibilities as a public service provider
 - Engage in a proper assessment of how many people will be affected by this pressure reduction strategy
 - Develop an estimate of the financial implications for households

- and local authorities across the capital
 - Agree to pay the cost of pump equipment or installation (as opposed to the cost of designing the pumps).
5. That council assembly believes that the pressure reduction plan is merely a cost-saving measure ironically proposed at a time when:
- Water bills are set to increase by about 13% above the rate of inflation over the next five years
 - Areas, including Dulwich, have been blighted by sudden drops in pressure and thereby loss of water – attributed to urgent leak repairs by Thames Water
 - Thames Water is already making handsome profits
 - Thames Water is pumping raw sewage into the Thames because of a failure to invest in modern sewage infrastructure (a step which has already caused damage to ecosystems in the Rotherhithe peninsula waterways).
6. That council thereby:
- Demands that Thames Water review its proposals and consider the impact, both practical and financial, on London residents and services
 - Calls on Thames Water to invest in its infrastructure so that customers no longer suffer from an interrupted basic service
 - Demands that Thames Water foot the bill for any pump costs incurred by a change in water pressure
 - Give its unequivocal backing to the Association of London Government (ALG) and the Greater London Authority in their attempts to hold Thames Water to account

The above motion was agreed.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Executive agenda and minutes April 5 2005	Constitutional Unit, Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB	Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Deborah Holmes, Borough Solicitor	
Report Author	Paula Thornton, Constitutional Team	
Version	Final	
Dated	May 9 2005	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor & Secretary	No	No
Chief Finance Officer	No	No
Executive Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services	May 9 2005	