

Item No. 5.	Classification: Open	Date: March 22 2006	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Members Question Time	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Chief Executive (Borough Solicitor)	

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 3.9: MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

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 shall be taken in the following order: the leader; the deputy leader; the executive member for resources; the executive member for health and adult care; executive member for housing management; executive member for regeneration & economic development; the executive member for communication & performance improvement; the executive member for equalities, culture and sport; the executive member for education and the executive member for environment and transport. The borough solicitor rotates the order of the questions at every meeting (CAPR 3.9(10) & (11)).

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, 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 LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR TONY RITCHIE

Would leader of the council please update me with current situation of the claim against the council by the owners of Imperial Gardens.

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BRADBURY

With regard to the report of the director of environment and leisure to the March 6 2006 meeting of the Dulwich community council (DCC) on the "Welcome to Dulwich" signs, does the leader of the council consider that either or both of the following represent good practice:

1. The manner in which the executive's decision of April 13 2004 referring only to borough gateway signs was taken as authority to incur expenditure on signs at the in-borough boundaries of all the community council areas; and
2. The manner in which the director, in conjunction with the borough solicitor, took action which had the effect of the DCC's decision of July 27 2005 opposing the signs not being brought to the executive's attention before the expenditure was incurred in respect of the DCC area.

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER

Can the leader provide an update on the pledge to employ community safety wardens across the borough and comment on their effectiveness, including figures on how many incidents they have reported for action, broken down by type and area?

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD

Why is Southwark Alliance choosing this particular time to seek local residents to join the board? (The closing date April 20 2006)

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR LEWIS ROBINSON

In light of the recent letter of invitation for members of the public to apply for community representation on the Southwark Alliance could he clarify how "some" community council chairs "will be asked" to help with the interview and selection process? Is he confident the Southwark Alliance's short listing and interview process meets the robust procedure followed for example by the council when selecting independent members of standards committee?

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN

Can the leader provide an update on the pledge to introduce a free phone housing repairs service?

7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT SMEATH

How is the effectiveness of community wardens measured?

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DANNY McCARTHY

What legal advice has the council received over the implementation of a borough wide DPPO, in light of the claim that it is "illegal"?

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DORA DIXON FYLE

How many wardens will be on patrol at any one time in Camberwell community council area?

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR JANE SALMON

Can the leader confirm that no changes have been made to the council's contract for pest control?

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DOMINIC THORNCROFT

Can the executive member confirm how many new community wardens will be dedicated to patrolling Nunhead ward exclusively? By what date will a full strength warden team be patrolling in Nunhead ward and through what local forum will the wardens be responsive to the expressed patrolling needs of local residents and tenants?

12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ANNE YATES

Can the leader comment on the success of community councils introduced during this administration?

13. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER

Could I ask the executive member to reassure the residents of my ward (Lane) that the successful Copleston Centre childcare facility will receive appropriate levels of funding to maintain its existence in the next round of funding?

14. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR AUBYN GRAHAM

Will the deputy leader say how many voluntary sector organisations have had their council grant withdrawn or reduced by more than 25% for year 2006/07 and how many are BME organisations.

15. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR WILLIAM ROWE

Would the executive member for resources please state when the "budget book" or equivalent for 2006/07 will be ready; and would she state her view as to what it should contain in order to enable members properly to be informed about, and to monitor, departmental and partnership expenditure, virements, etc, during the course of the year?

16. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES GURLING

Will the executive member for resources set out for each of the last ten years:

- a) the percentage council tax increase set by Southwark Council?
- b) the average percentage council tax increase in London?
- c) where Southwark ranks in the 'league table' of highest and lowest charging London boroughs?

17. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR BOB SKELLY

Can the executive member for resources provide figures for council tax debt and rent arrears year-on-year from 1997 to date and how these figures compare with other London boroughs?

18. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR MICHELLE PEARCE

What was the council's spend on consultants by each department for the last financial year?

19. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN

How much did the council pay out to claimants in legal actions brought against the council last year, and how many of these actions did the council contest?

20. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR FIONA COLLEY

What steps have been taken to ensure that the current staff of the Town Hall's post room will not be adversely affected by the privatisation of post room services, and that they are fully informed about the details of the changes in working arrangements and contracts? What steps were taken to consult the staff on the privatisation proposals?

21. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND ADULT CARE FROM COUNCILLOR TAYU SITU

What percentage of staff working in (a) children's homes (b) sheltered housing (c) older persons care homes used by the council have been fully checked against the Criminal Records Bureau and Protection of Children Act barring list?

22. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR TOBY ECKERSLEY

With regard to the management fee charged to leaseholders in respect of major works, would the executive member with housing management responsibilities please reconcile (a) the information provided in a report by the director of housing to leaseholder council on November 18 2002 to the effect that a decision of the council had been made to implement a new sliding scale of charges (4% for contracts over £1m, 5% for contracts £500,000 - £1m, rising to 10% for contract under £20,000 - this scale having been set out in information to Leaseholder's Council on 25 March 2002) with (b) the proposed charge (on top of an 8.6% professional fee charge) of 10% on a £750,000 contract proposed for Pynnersmead and Denesmead in my ward, and (c) with charges of 10% for other recent large contracts elsewhere in the borough?

23. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR CHARLIE SMITH

How many visits have the council pest control services paid to the Lindley estate in the last year and what action to date has been taken?

24. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ALUN HAYES

What is the estimated percentage of current rent collection for 2005/06 and what is the estimated percentage in terms of current rent plus arrears collected?

25. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ABDUL MOHAMED

Could the executive member state whether the housing department is satisfied with the current pest control measures on the Aylesbury estate?

26. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL BATES

Why does the council continue to refuse the requests from the local tenant's and resident's association (TRA) for secure entry doors to the four towers on the Portland estate; as well as Harry Hinkins House, James Stroud House and others on the Nelson estate?

27. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ALISON MOISE

At the East Camberwell Housing Area Forum held on Monday February 27 2006 angry delegates felt let down by Southwark technical services' and the Eco Lab's (pest control contractor) failure to carefully monitor performance and carry out effective pest control block treatment to identified council estates shown up in the council specification for pest control report dated August 12 2005. So can he explain why Southwark Council is still continuing to pay and use the same contractor to carry out the pest treatment, and when does he expect effective pest eradication treatment to begin?

28. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD

The Chair of the D' Eynsford Estate Tenant's and Resident's Association, together with fed up tenants complained to their housing officers at a meeting held on Tuesday January 10 2006 about cancelled appointments on Monday January 9 2006 made with Eco Lab (pest control contractor) to carry out outstanding pest control treatment to each block. The reason given was because Southwark Council had cancelled the block treatment programme.

Will he explain why these appointments were cancelled on the same day without prior notice given to council tenants/leaseholders, and will he assure tenants that they will be paid compensation for missed appointments, lengthy delays, distress and inconvenience caused to them?

29. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL WATSON

Given the need to invest in renewable and sustainable energy, can the executive member for regeneration and economic development explain why the government has withdrawn the grant for a new community energy programme on the Aylesbury estate and what he is doing to secure the grant for the rebuilt estate?

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

What consultation was carried out by the council relating to the construction of bin sheds near to Pilgrims Way school on the Tustin Estate. Is the lead member confident that the school and local residents were adequately consulted?

31. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ALFRED BANYA

How many open or outstanding planning enforcement cases are there in each ward and in each community council area?

32. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER

Is the executive member happy that improvements were made to potentially dangerous steps outside the Town Hall within the space of a few short weeks after a fall there recently, but that falls and accidents continue to take place on East Street in Walworth and yet virtually nothing is done to improve the road and pavement surface for market traders and shoppers?

33. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NORMA GIBBES

Does the executive member believe that the face-to-face programme represents value for money, and can he say when it will start providing savings for the council?

34. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, CULTURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER

What is the take up of the new disabled permits and how many people are eligible?

35. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, CULTURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ABDUR-RAHMAN OLAYIWOLA

Can the executive member for equalities, culture and sport provide figures for

- a) Library; and
- b) leisure centre usage in the borough each year since 1998?

36. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, CULTURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD PORTER

How much has been spent on maintaining the borough's leisure centres year-on-year since 1998?

37. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, CULTURE & SPORT FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN FRIARY

What is the status of the current negotiations with Fusion, and when does the executive member expect a deal to be reached?

38. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN O'BRIEN

Can the executive member for education provide an update on the pledge to introduce a common schools admissions procedure?

39. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS

What percentage of children received their first, second and third priority secondary school in Southwark this year and what percentage of children were allocated to a school that wasn't on their preference list?

40. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR JELIL LADIPO

How much has been spent on improving roads and pavements across the borough year-on-year since 1998?

41. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR BILLY KAYADA

What was the total cost of the "art on the cart project"?

42. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MARK PURSEY

Can the executive member for environment and transport comment on Southwark's participation in the Mayor's London Clean Up campaign?

43. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR JELIL LADIPO

Can the executive member for environment and transport provide an update on recycling, giving year-on-year figures since 1997 and commenting on the factors that have influenced the amount of recycling in Southwark?

44. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR SARAH WELFARE

Would the executive member consider the introduction of alcohol licensing "saturation zones" where the number of licensed premises concentrated in a small area has become very high?