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| Item No. 17 | Classification: Open | Date: July 18 2006 | Meeting Name: Executive |
| Report title: | | Motions Referred from Council Assembly | |
| Ward(s) or groups affected: | | All | |
| From: | | Chief Executive (Acting Borough Solicitor) | |

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the executive considers the motions set out in the appendices attached to the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Council assembly at its meetings on Wednesday, March 22 and June 28 2006 considered a number of motions that it agreed and referred to the executive for detailed consideration.
3. The executive is required to consider the motions referred to it by council assembly. Any proposals in a motion are treated as a recommendation only. The final decision of the executive will be reported back to the next meeting of the council assembly. When considering a motion, executive can decide to:
 - Note the motion; *or*
 - Agree the motion in its entirety; *or*
 - Amend the motion; *or*
 - Reject the motion.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 3.10(3), the attached motions were referred to the executive. The executive will report on the outcome of its deliberations upon the motions to a subsequent meeting of council assembly.
5. The constitution allocates responsibility for particular functions to council assembly, including 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.
6. Any key issues such as policy, community impact or funding implications are included in the advice from the relevant chief officer.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

| Background Papers | Held At | Contact |
|--|---|---|
| Motions submitted in accordance with council assembly procedure rule 3.10 (3). | Town Hall, Peckham Road, London. SE5 8UB | Lesley John Constitutional Team 020 7525 7236 |

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AUDIT TRAIL

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Lead Officer | Ian Millichap, Constitutional Team Manager |
| Report Author | Lesley John, Constitutional Officer |
| Version | final |

| | | |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Dated | 10.7.06 | |
| Key Decision? | No | |
| CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER | | |
| Officer Title | Comments Sought | Comments included |
| Chief Officer | Yes | Yes |
| Executive Member | | |
| Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services | | July 10 2006 |

CHAMBERLAIN COTTAGES

At council assembly on March 22 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Ian Wingfield and seconded by Councillor John Friary. Council assembly agreed the motion and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

RECOMMENDATION: That in light of the true intentions of the residents of Chamberlain Cottages wishing only for a gate to be sited at the entrance to their cul-de-sac for safety reasons, this council assembly requests the council executive to consider progressing negotiations with residents and agreeing funding for the gate as soon as possible.

COMMENTS FROM THE ACTING BOROUGH SOLICITOR

1. Chamberlain Cottages is a public highway over which the public have a right to pass and re-pass. It provides access to Nos.1 to 8 Chamberlain Cottagers and rear access to a number of other properties in both Camberwell Church Street and Camberwell Grove. As a result the street can not be gated as this would constitute an obstruction as the public's right to pass and re-pass would be removed.
2. It has been suggested that one way forward is to apply to the Magistrates Court to "stop up the highway" under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980. This allows the highway authority, in this case Southwark Council, to make an application if the highway is either
 - a) considered unnecessary, or
 - b) can be diverted so as to make it nearer or more commodious to the public.
3. The public highway is the main and only access to Nos. 1 to 8 and therefore it is not possible for the highway authority to stand up in court and declare that the highway is unnecessary. In addition part of the use of a public highway is the routing of public utility services, e.g. supplies for electricity, telephones, etc., and these companies are very reluctant to loose easy access to the services by the transfer of public highways to private ownership. As a consequence they may object to the order being made. It should also be noted that if the highway is stopped up then it would revert to the legal owner of the land on which the highway is located which currently is not known.
4. Option b) is not relevant in these circumstances.
5. Although under section 117 it is feasible for the resident's to request the Council to make an application it would have to be with them indemnifying the Council as to costs. This would mean that if the application was unsuccessful, bearing in mind that the highway authority can not make the case, the residents would be left with a legal bill covering all the costs. Secondly without knowing who would own the land once an order was made could leave the residents in a very difficult position.
6. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environments Act 2005 permitted "Gating Orders" to be introduced in particulars circumstances but that these circumstances did not apply to Chamberlain Cottages. Officers have considered

the legal options available to the council in relation to this highway but, as stated above, they cannot be used in this case. Any further instances of anti-social behaviour that are reported to the council will be investigated in the usual way.

LONDON BRIDGE TO VICTORIA TRAIN SERVICES

At council assembly on March 22 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Beverley Bassom and seconded by Councillor Graham Neale. The motion was subsequently amended and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

- RECOMMENDATION:**
1. That concern be noted on the consultation by Network Rail on the Cross London Utilisation Strategy (CRUS), which includes proposals to divert the London Bridge to Victoria train service to Clapham Junction.
 2. That it is noted that this will have an extremely adverse impact on Southwark residents travelling to London Victoria from South Bermondsey, Queens Road Peckham, Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill Stations, as well as those coming into Southwark to work and visit.
 3. That it be noted that recent debates that have concluded that good transport links in and out of the borough are vital to Southwark's economic and social development and believes that Network Rail's proposals would diminish transport links to and from Southwark. Furthermore, rather than considering cuts to these South East London lines, Network Rail should be increasing and promoting services to these stations, which are located in a part of London which is currently very poorly served by transport options.
 4. That it be further noted that there is strong feelings against the plans within the community, notes the formal response of the council which states the council does not support these proposals, and fully supports the robust objections to these proposals made by local representatives, such as the MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, the Greater London Authority member for Lambeth and Southwark, and members of this authority.
 5. That Network Rail be called on to abandon any proposals to cut services between London Bridge and Victoria, and asks the Mayor of London and the secretary of state for transport to ensure that this vital rail link continues to operate and also to increase services to these South East London stations.

COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR REGENERATION

The Network Rail's Cross London Route Utilisation Strategy reviews the use of the rail network up to and including 2016 and considers future passenger growth and the needs of the freight industry.

The report contains 16 options for consideration and a business case assessment of each option. The report contains a number of options that are relevant to Southwark on a London wide basis such as freight usage, length of trains and carriage layouts.

The option that directly affects Southwark is option seven, which proposes to divert the South London Line, London Bridge to Victoria service to Clapham Junction. The council's opposition to this option was highlighted in the council's response to this strategy. Lambeth also raised objection to option seven as their residents will be similarly affected.

This proposal would significantly disadvantage Southwark residents and businesses that currently rely upon the service, particularly passengers traveling to London Victoria from South Bermondsey, Queens Road Peckham, Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill stations.

The diversion of this route to Clapham Junction will reduce the public transport options of a large number of existing passengers. This option relies upon the train operating companies (currently South East trains and Southern) providing a replacement stopping service between Peckham Rye and Victoria. However, it would appear that no replacement service is currently being offered and the council does not feel that this is satisfactory.

The Network Rail business case concludes that this option will lead to a small reduction in passengers carried. It will, in fact, reduce public transport interchange options significantly, which contravenes both Southwark Council and the Mayor's transport objectives, in particular promoting more sustainable modes of travel and improving travel choice.

It should be noted that the 16 options proposed by Network Rail would need to undergo further technical assessment before the implementation of the scheme. Additionally, there is opportunity to formally object to the finalised RUS before its adoption by the Office of the Rail Regulator.

395 BUS ROUTE

At council assembly on March 22 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Lisa Rajan and seconded by Councillor David Hubber. Council assembly agreed the motion and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That concern be noted for plans by Transport for London (TfL) to close the 395 bus route which runs from Surrey Quays shopping centre to Limehouse.
2. That it be noted that this is the only bus route that goes through the Rotherhithe tunnel and therefore provides a vital transport link across the River Thames.
3. That it be noted that TfL's plans would adversely affect elderly people in particular as well as reducing access to local shops and services for those residents on the Rotherhithe peninsula.
4. That council assembly calls on TfL to reverse its plans and consider how public transport can be enhanced in light of the Canada Water regeneration, not diminished.

COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR REGENERATION

Updated comments to follow.

EAST DULWICH STREET LIGHTING

At council assembly on March 22 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Charlie Smith and seconded by Councillor Sarah Welfare. The motion was subsequently amended and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

- RECOMMENDATION:**
1. That it be noted that many residents in Southwark place crime and the fear of crime high on their list of concerns. Poorly lit streets are recognised as a major contributory factor for this concern. The majority of the street lights in the East Dulwich ward are the old yellow lamps that give the roads within the ward a grim and dark appearance which causes local residents to feel uneasy when walking in many of the back streets and are reluctant to venture out of their homes after dark. Such lights are also common elsewhere in SE22.
 2. That, council therefore called upon officers to carry out an audit of the lighting in SE22 to identify the yellow lamps in need of replacement and to give estimates of costs for replacing the existing street lights with the new generation of lamps and columns that brighten the pavements and roads but do not pollute the night sky.
 3. That council assembly called for a full report complete with a timetable for the replacement of the street lighting in East Dulwich to be brought to the executive before the summer recess.

COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

Fear of crime is a key concern for communities in the borough including East Dulwich. It is also the case that poor lighting can contribute to this concern.

An audit of the lighting improvement requirements for Dulwich, Nunhead and Peckham Rye carried out as part of the borough wide programme in this area is being undertaken and a full report will be brought to the executive member in July 2006.

We are also working with our partners to reduce crime and fear of crime in the area. This has included:-

Setting up a Together Action Zone (TAZ) for Dulwich in April this year. The TAZ is a multi-agency partnership forum (made up of the Police, Community Wardens, Youth Offending Team officers, Southwark Anti Social Behaviour Unit (SASBU) officers and residents (street leaders) that targets local reductions in crime and anti social behaviour and seeks to improve environmental quality. All seven other community council areas in the borough have a TAZ in place already.
Introduction of Safer Neighbourhood Teams.
Introduction of community wardens for Dulwich.

No. 3 BUS SERVICE

At council assembly on March 22 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Lewis Robinson and seconded by Councillor Kim Humphreys. The motion was agreed and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

- RECOMMENDATION:**
1. That it be noted that the cuts to the No.3 bus service implemented last year by Transport for London (TfL), and the claim by TfL that cutting the frequency of the service was designed to improve the reliability of the route (i.e. the bus will turn up when the timetable says).
 2. That it be further noted that the No.3 bus provides a vital, and in many cases the only, service to many residents in the south of the borough, an area already poorly served by public transport to their work, local hospitals and schools.
 3. That council assembly expressed its disappointment to learn the results of a recent survey of frequent users of the route, the key findings of which are as follows:
 - Of 114 respondents, 94 stated that their journey had become longer and more difficult since the cuts;
 - 73 stated reliability had got even worse, 33 no difference, and only 5 said it had improved;
 - The most common complaints remain those of speeding and “bunching” of buses, the very problems which TfL claimed would be resolved by cutting the frequency.
 4. That council assembly requested that the executive consider these findings and the council to support ward member’s representations to TfL and London TravelWatch that these cuts be reviewed.

COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR REGENERATION

The council notes the results of the bus user survey and will report the findings to London Buses. It is anticipated that London Buses will respond to this matter by referring to the current excess waiting time figures for the route 3 service compared to the previous figures before the frequency change in April 2005. The figures indicate that excess waiting time for the route 3 service has halved from 2.5 minutes to 1.2 minutes since the inception of the frequency change. Excess waiting time is the benchmark for bus service reliability throughout London.

The matter has been tabled at the next Southwark / London Buses liaison meeting for further discussion on the apparent mismatch between the survey referred to in the motion and the figures that Transport for London have supplied.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

At council assembly on March 22 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Richard Thomas and seconded by Councillor Jane Salmon. The motion was agreed and is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That it be noted that Southwark has become the first-ever recipient of a new environmental award, the "Overall Winner" of the Environmental Campaigns (ENCAMS) Cleaner Safer Greener network awards.
2. That it be further noted that a waste management & transport manager from the environment and leisure department had won the Environmental Champion award and that Southwark took second place in the Innovation award.
3. That council assembly believed that these awards are fitting given the huge achievements in making Southwark cleaner and greener, including:
 - Cleaning up Southwark's streets from the 5th dirtiest in London in 2002 to the 4th cleanest last year, following the decision to replace multiple contracts with one newly created in-house service (Southwark Cleaning) in 2002;
 - Quadrupling recycling over the last four years, by introducing doorstep recycling for all street properties, brown bins for garden waste, mini-recycling centres for blocks of flats, and trialing door-to-door collections on council estates;
 - Becoming the first London borough to use bio diesel and switching nearly 50% of the council's vehicle fleet to renewable bio fuels, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from each vehicle to virtually zero.
 - Cracking down on enviro-crimes, such as fly tipping, graffiti, littering and dog fouling through rigid enforcement, issuing 3,745 fixed penalty notices in the last four years and pursuing successful prosecutions.
4. That it be noted that there is still much more it can achieve but believes that Southwark's environment has improved massively and thanks all those officers who have worked hard to achieve this success, congratulates them on winning the ENCAMS award and further commits to redoubling our efforts to make Southwark cleaner and greener.

COMMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

Southwark Council were shortlisted for three out of four award categories at the recent Encams Cleaner Greener Safer Conference; Innovation, Community Consultation and Environment Champion. Simon Baxter, the Client and Enforcement Manager in the Waste division, won the Environment Champion award. The Council was runner up in both the Innovation and Community Consultation categories and also received the "Overall Winner" of the Environmental Campaigns (ENCAMS) Cleaner Safer Greener network awards.

The awards recognise a number of projects such as our groundbreaking awareness campaigns 'blingin or mingin' and 'stalking litter' and our work with the community to design services around their needs through, amongst others, the street leader initiative and the community council's. The awards also recognise the significant improvements that have been made in the cleanliness of the borough as a whole.

It is pleasing for all the officers concerned that our peers in the network recognise the difference the Council has made in improving the local environment and 160 organisations voted the Council the "Overall Winner" award.

Whilst it is recognised that there is always more to be done, the improvements that have been made in a short period of time are significant and reflect the Council's commitment to delivering a cleaner greener safer Southwark both now and in the future.

YOUTH FACILITIES IN PECKHAM RYE

At council assembly on March 22 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Aubyn Graham and seconded by Councillor Robert Smeath. The motion was subsequently amended and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council assembly noted with concern the lack of youth club facilities in the Peckham Rye area, and requests the relevant executive member to bring an urgent report back to council assembly on what steps are being taken to improve activities for children and young people in the area including the provision of full time club-based youth activities.
2. That it be further noted that the executive member for equalities, culture and sport announced a full review (including consultation with young people) into youth and sports provision in the Peckham Rye area at the opening of the newly refurbished Peckham Rye Park on March 11 2006. Council assembly believed that the results of this review should provide the basis for further reports.

COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Within the Community Council area of Nunhead and Peckham Rye, based on our current records, there are 3,307 young people aged between 11 – 19yrs living in the area and of this, 43% were in contact with the youth service in 2004/005. Many of the young people participated in many of the following provisions within and around the area:

- o 17 youth and community provisions (11 – 19yrs)
- o 1 Early Years Centre
- o 3 After-school clubs
- o 1 Adventure Play space
- o 1 Playroom (One – o - clock club)
- o 4 sports clubs.
- o The recently opened school/community sports facility at Waverley Sports College.

Within the area a number of play, sports and youth activities have been taking place, of which a quick snap is indicated below:

1. The Youth Service Area 4 Detached Team is working across both Consort, Cossall and Brayards estates on Tuesday evenings and Rye Hill Estate, Ivy Dale Rd, Tappesfield Estate, Nunhead station area and Evelina Road on Thursday evenings. The main issue identified by the detached team has been the lack of space to meet to run workshops and short term youth activities. The Rye Hill Tenants and Residents Hall is currently unable to accommodate the presence of young people within the space, despite assurance that the young people would be supervised.
2. Discussions are ongoing to access the Nunhead Community Centre for regular youth activities. This is being coordinated with the Peckham

Programme team to look at ways of opening up this provision. If this can be achieved, then there will be 2 sessions of youth work taking place from that venue, including Saturday opening.

3. The Salvation Army based in the area is working with young people in both Nunhead and Peckham Rye Ward. This has just started up and therefore early days.
4. A Youth Provider Network (YPN) covering the needs of young people the Nunhead and Peckham Rye and Peckham Community Council areas is now established and is looking at provisions widely across the respective areas. This group is actively involved with the Summer activities programme coordination
5. The Peckham Panthers Junior Rugby Club operates on Sunday mornings for young people aged 8 – 16yrs
6. Sports programme take place over the weekends at the Waverley Sports College on both Saturdays and Sundays
7. Work has not yet started on the redevelopment of the Peckham Rye Adventure Play Ground. When this provision is completed it will have on site a new climbing wall in addition to the usual play facilities.
8. The Area Development Team are currently running a one week programme based in Peckham Rye Park and will commence the week beginning 14 August.

With regards to steps being taken to improve facilities and opportunities, in addition to some of the points raised above (e.g. access to Tenants and Resident Halls, re-development of the Peckham Rye Adventure Play ground and the opening up of the Waverley Sports College) there is work taking place across a number of agencies and service areas who are in scope to working with children and young people:

Sports and recreation:

- Development of targeted sports provision through the Community Games as part of a wider youth inclusion approach;
- The promotion of the healthy schools programme, including ensuring children and young people gain access to at least 2hrs of sports activities out of school each week
- Delivery of sports activities in the community through the National Community Sports Coaching scheme

Open Spaces and Parks:

- Development of a range of fun and educational activities such as developing the mini-beast areas, conservation activities, youth exchange to New York with other park based youth groups.
- The Young Friends of the parks (i.e. Peckham Rye Park) will be responsible for their own garden plots, involved in park audit walks to improve the physical environment.

Heritage:

- Community Outreach Work – engaging with 5 of Southwark’s communities to collect personal stories and re-interpret objects from the collection as part of the new permanent exhibitions (relocation project 2006).

Arts and Media:

- Continuing development of STEP (Southwark theatre festival for children and young people) to include the chance to take part in large-scale outdoor performances and to experience working in the theatre.
- Engaging young people to participate in the Thames Festival, which provides great opportunities for taking part in a London-wide event and everything that a large-scale carnival -festival involves.
- The development of 'The Heart' which is a performance and workshop space for children and young people to take place on Peckham Square by 2009

Play:

- to provide targeted and responsive opportunities for children and young people to participate in freely chosen activities, via the Mobile Sport and Play Unit programme.
- to provide work experience and placement opportunities for those entering or developing their role within Play (opportunity to increase volunteering amongst the young in the local area).

Youth and Connexions Service:

- target young people not attached to schools to enable them to fully participate in social and personal development enrichment programmes through outreach and detached work.
- provide youth provisions in well equipped locations and secure adequate opening of youth clubs (e.g. Tenants and Resident Halls);
- provide and develop the Millennium Volunteers programme to engage with over 200 young volunteers per annum (see above)
- develop and deliver work based learning opportunities to young mothers in the local area who not in education, employment or training (one of the areas with a high teenage pregnancy rate)

In addition to this, consideration will be given to how best to communicate what is taking place in the local area and this we propose to do through a range of outlets including:

- flyers, posters, directory and website (Southwark and Youth Service), Kiosks, football clubs' brochures (e.g. Millwall)
- Youth council
- Youth forums
- Connexions One stop shops/access points (i.e. Rye Lane)
- Magazines and newsletters

THAMES WATER AND CENTRAL LONDON'S WATER SUPPLY

At council assembly on June 28 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Lisa Rajan and seconded by Councillor Kim Humphreys. Council assembly agreed the motion and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Westminster council's proposal for a cross-borough action plan to highlight and remedy the mismanagement of central London's water supply by Thames Water be welcomed, and notes that the London boroughs of Camden, Lambeth and Islington have given their support to the plan be noted.
2. That Thames Water's level of service has declined markedly over recent years and believes they should be held to account be noted.
3. That concern over the frequent loss of pressure in tower blocks in Southwark as well as Thames Water's failure to address leakages adequately be noted.
4. That council assembly further notes that water supply related problems are often wrongly perceived by the general public to be the fault of the council rather than Thames Water.
5. That the 'cross-borough charter for improvement' be supported and council assembly requests that the executive considers the following ten-point action plan for Thames Water:
 - OFWAT leakage targets to be met year on year
 - Major burst mains to be actioned immediately. Minor leaks to be repaired within seven days of them being reported
 - A log of all leaks known to Thames Water to be provided on the Internet for public access
 - Technical liaison officers' contact details to be provided to London boroughs
 - Emergency supplies of water to be delivered individually to residents in the event of a loss of supply
 - No roads to be closed without prior council approvals being in place. No parking bays to be occupied without proper suspensions being requested
 - Thames Water to pay for London boroughs to inspect 60% of their works instead of the normal

30%

- “Courtesy boards” to be provided at all sites
- Customer service improved and call centres to provide a rapid and well-informed response to all callers
- Thames Water and their contractors to become committed members of all boroughs’ Considerate Streetwork schemes.

Comments from the Strategic Director Environment and Leisure

1. Overview and scrutiny committee examined a serious disruption to water supplies following a burst in Nunhead in 2003. Serious problems caused by low water pressure were raised by residents during this process, specifically problems affecting Denmark Hill estate and East Dulwich estate. Overview and scrutiny committee (OSC) have remained concerned about the implications of low water pressure and have received periodic updates on the matter.
2. The Greater London Authority (GLA) carried out a scrutiny process into water supplies to London in 2003 and concluded that Thames Water needed to consult more and be more aware of the risks to residents in high rise buildings posed by pressure reduction/low pressure. London boroughs, including Southwark, have presented evidence, with the Association of London Government (ALG) leading an all-party presentation, principally on the question of costs.
3. Following the original OSC meetings, officers from housing have met with Thames Water on a number of occasions to talk through local issues and how plans may affect Southwark. The most recent communication has been concerned with drought issues and water shortages.
4. In response to the ALG we have identified all properties, which could be “at risk”, were Thames Water to revert to supplying all water at 1 bar pressure. Initial costings have been based upon a simple approach of installing booster sets to all such blocks. The housing department’s special technical services have recognised that this does not give us a full or realistic picture of what we may need and have engaged a consultant to examine a sample of our stock, current supply situations and consider what alternatives may be used in the event of reduced pressure.
5. The ALG has convened a number of meetings with representatives of Thames Water and London boroughs to highlight concerns at the approach taken by the company. Principally, criticism of Thames Water has been about the lack of adequate consultation or communications to both residents and landlords. Southwark has attended these meetings and has provided evidence on local issues and the possible implications for Southwark of reduced pressure.
6. Member level negotiations with Thames Water were suspended during the election period. By April 2006, a draft protocol to improve communications was agreed, subject to member endorsement post election. The protocol is not a legally binding document but indicates an agreement from Thames Water to work more effectively and supportively with boroughs. Ultimately, Thames Water’s levels of service to customers are as agreed with Ofwat, in accordance with the

statutory and regulatory framework for the supply of drinking water and waste water services.

7. As a result of ALG lobbying, Thames Water have also offered to pay 50% of the costs relating to booster pumps that are installed as a result of supply pressure reductions caused by their Network Improvement Programme. In addition, they have improved their original interest-free two-year loan for the remaining 50% of the costs from 2 years to a 5-year period. However, the ALG is negotiating for Thames Water to cover 100% of any costs associated with water pressure reductions. This negotiating position has been agreed at the 33 borough ALG Leaders' Committee and the 33 borough ALG Housing Steering Group.
8. The council is currently installing booster pumps to Denmark Hill estate, as the risk of future problems remains. Thames Water is not paying towards this work, as it does not result from changes to their network. The level of reported issues affecting East Dulwich estate was less extreme and the estate is subject to a major regeneration scheme, which will take the water pressure issue into account (planned to begin on site in January 2007).
9. Causes for dissatisfaction with Thames Water include leakage rates, the speed with which major bursts are repaired, water pressure levels and the quality of customer care when supplies are interrupted. In response to these issues, Westminster council has drawn up a "Charter for Improvement" which it plans to present to Thames Water in the near future. The improvements sought are as summarised in the motion. According to the Leader of Westminster council, this is a non-political, cross-borough action, for which Camden, Lambeth and Islington have already offered their support.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT – NUNHEAD & PECKHAM RYE HOUSING OFFICE

At council assembly on June 28 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Robert Smeath and seconded by Councillor Andrew Pakes. Council assembly agreed the motion and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That it be noted that serious concern about the level and quality of service provided to tenants and leaseholders from Nunhead & Peckham Rye neighbourhood housing office (NHO) had been noted by council assembly.
2. That it be noted that a recent example where a toilet overflow took up to 5 months to replace and unacceptable delays for residents to be able to see officers from the tenancy management team had been noted by council assembly and that council assembly further noted that a flood left residents without electricity overnight, despite being promised emergency assistance which did not appear.
3. That council assembly calls on the executive member for housing to investigate service levels at Nunhead & Peckham Rye NHO and then report back on the steps he intends to take to secure improvements in service levels.

Comments from the Strategic Director Housing

1. The service levels at Nunhead and Peckham Rye (N&PR) - as with other area housing offices - are the subject of monthly council performance management plus regular review by tenants and residents through the area forums. More specifically, in N&PR the area forum has established a specific compact involving officers, contractors, members, tenants and residents which, through its partnership board, reviews performance in a wider context. Recent considerations through each of these fora have shown no diminution of service, indeed repair statistics were at their best in the last report to area forum in April 2006.
2. As the 2 specific cases alluded to in the motion are not identified, it is not possible to give a categorical case review. However, it is believed that the first is a case where the tenant refused access on several occasions and the repair could only be completed following the written threat of forced entry. The other instance is believed to be one where an error occurred when the customer services centre ordered electrical repairs to one flat affected by flooding but omitted to order similar works to a second affected flat outside normal working hours. When this was brought to the area office's attention on the following morning, power was restored by the afternoon.
3. Area housing managers have invited all ward councillors to meet with their management teams since the election and are establishing ongoing liaison arrangements. Further invites are being extended where councillors may not have yet been able to take up this opportunity. Should the invite be accepted, the

N&PR meeting with Councillor Smeath will specifically include discussion on the perception of the overall quality of the service and the details of the specific cases. A report on the outcome of that meeting will be forwarded to the executive member of housing.

4. In addition, the executive member for housing has met with the N&PR housing office as a priority to understand the issues addressed in this motion.

COPLESTON CHILDREN'S CENTRE

At council assembly on June 28 2006 the motion was moved by Councillor Veronica Ward and seconded by Councillor Susan Elan Jones. The motion was subsequently amended and it is referred as a recommendation to the executive for consideration:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That this council notes with regret that the Copleston Children's Centre will be closing at the end of July. This centre is well known in the borough and has provided high quality child-care for children in the area for almost 30 years. The council wishes to thank all those staff, volunteers and parents who have given so much commitment to this centre over these years.
2. That it be noted that there are many reasons for the closure, including the provision of extra nursery places at nearby schools, the hours of operation (from 08.30 to 15.30) not meeting the needs of many working parents, and the fact that only 58% of places had been filled by May 2006 (14 out of a possible 24).
3. That concerns were raised over the future of the centre early in 2006. In response to a question at council assembly in March 2006 asking whether the Copleston "would receive appropriate levels of funding to maintain its existence", the then deputy leader of the council reassured members that a new financial model would "ensure that all existing day nurseries can continue to function."
4. That it be noted that this was followed by the allocation of £65,779 to the centre for 2006/07, equal to the allocation received in 2005/06, and the offer of a further £4,106 in business support to address the issue of sustainability.
5. That council assembly calls upon the executive to look at early years provision in the relation to the long term planning process given the expected rise in the number of children in the borough. Assembly urges that the executive examine why, given the high standards of child care being offered and the needs we have in the borough to support vulnerable children, a community nursery of such high quality had to conclude that it was not financially possible to continue and to consider how such valuable provision can be retained and make a contribution towards the provision of much needed high quality child care.

COMMENT FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Copleston Children's Centre is a community nursery which has received grant funding from the council for many years. The council has not been officially informed of the decision to close the centre.
2. Following a Best Value Review (2002) the council agreed to a major realignment of funding to target council services for early years towards vulnerable children and those at risk whilst encouraging working parents to claim financial subsidy towards the cost of their childcare via the Government's Working Tax credit scheme.
3. As a consequence the council did reduce funding to the community nurseries and entered a service level agreement model of funding with them. The council's contribution to Copleston has not reduced further and £65,779 has been allocated to the nursery in 2005-6 and 2006-7. The council has also provided a further £4160 for business support to assist the centre to achieve long-term sustainability.
4. The on-going viability of the Copleston Centre is dependent on the centre attracting sufficient interest from local parents to fill the places available. At the end of May, we understand, the centre had 14 of its 24 places occupied. One aspect that may impact on the Copleston Centre's ability to achieve sustainability is that it only offers a service for fewer than 5s from 8.30-3.30 whereas the service specification attached to local authority funding requires wrap around care 8.00-6.00. The shorter hours on offer from the centre are less likely to be attractive to working parents.
5. There is no overall shortage of childcare places within the borough. The council is committed to providing quality education and childcare at an agreed and equitable price. The commissioning budget for community nurseries has been fully allocated on an equitable basis and the other settings are successfully planning provision for the current and future years. The long term planning of childcare places rests with the local authority which has a duty to develop the childcare market to reflect any changes in local needs.