

# Council Assembly

Wednesday 25 February 2015

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## Supplemental Agenda

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**Note:** The Mayor's 2015-16 final draft budget was approved unamended by the London Assembly on 23 February 2015. The Mayor's Band D precept is therefore confirmed as £295.00 for the 32 boroughs and 86.13 for the City of London

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Date: 24 February 2015

<b>Item No.</b> 2.1	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 25 February 2015	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Question on reports - Council Plan 2014/15 – 2017/18	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN HAYES**

Is the leader confident that the council will be able to deliver on the commitments set out in the council plan in the context of a £20.4m government cut to the council's spending power this year, with further cuts likely in future years?

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL COYLE**

Can the leader give an update on the council's campaign to extend the Bakerloo line to Camberwell and the Old Kent Road?

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL FLEMING**

How will the leader ensure that the council's ambitious house building programme enables communities to stay together and that local people benefit from regeneration of their local area?

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CHRIS GONDE**

The Liberal Democrats have suggested that the council's free swimming and gyms policy should not be a priority for public health, just as they did with free healthy school meals. Can the leader assure me that free swimming and gym use will remain a top priority for this administration?

**5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES OKOSUN**

Can the leader update us on progress with the council's childcare commission and when the outcomes will be published?

**6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

Can the leader update us on work identifying site options for a new secondary school in the north of the borough, as mentioned in the Quarter 2 2014/2015 commentary on BSL7?

**7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES**

Can the leader explain why there are no commitments or milestones in the council plan on reducing health inequalities caused by air pollution, obesity, consumption of alcohol/illegal drugs, or sexually transmitted infections?

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager
<b>Report Author</b>	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	20 February 2015

<b>Item No.</b> 2.2	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 25 February 2015	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Question on reports - Policy and Resource Strategy – 2015/16 to 2017/18: Revenue Budget	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

**1. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL COYLE**

In the foreword to the cabinet report at Appendix 1, the cabinet member notes that Southwark is the third hardest hit local authority in the country in 2015/16 in terms of reduction in spending power. Does the cabinet member agree that it is unfair that government cuts to local authorities are hitting the most deprived boroughs the hardest?

**2. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE DALE**

Paragraph 11 of the report proposes a one off use of reserves of £6.2 million to the revenue budget. Given the uncertainty about future government funding to local authorities, is the cabinet member confident this proposal will not significantly affect the council's ability to manage potential risks?

**3. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

How much historic council tax and business rate debt has been collected or written off in each of the past four years?

**4. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN**

What research has been carried out as part of the budget challenge process into the impact on recycling levels in other boroughs that have scrapped the free provision of biodegradable food waste bags to residents?

**5. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL**

What work is currently underway to identify efficiencies within the public health budget to ensure more funding for preventative work to reduce health inequalities in Southwark?

**6. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

How much is the current corporate 'telephony refresh' costing and what levels of savings is it expected to produce?

**7. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

In addition to the council's waste management facility, what work has the council carried out so far on the scope for further installation of photovoltaic or solar panels across its estate to reduce the council's energy costs and carbon footprint?

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager
<b>Report Author</b>	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	20 February 2015

**AMENDMENTS**

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**ITEM 2.1: Council Plan 2014/15 – 2017/18** (see pages 1-46 of the main agenda)

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**AMENDMENT A**

**Moved:** Councillor James Barber

**Seconded:** Councillor Rosie Shimell

After paragraph 1, **insert** a new paragraph:

2. Agrees that the most appropriate and effective place for the quarterly monitoring reports on progress against the measures and milestones for each Council Plan theme is the overview and scrutiny committee, rather than the cabinet.

In line with the above change, **delete** the first sentences in paragraph 14 of the main report (page 3) and **insert**:

“The overview and scrutiny committee will receive quarterly monitoring reports on progress against the measures and milestones for each Council Plan theme. The Leader will also present...”

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**ITEM 2.2: Policy and Resources Strategy 2015/16 – 2017/18 – Revenue Budget** (see pages 47-172 of the main agenda)

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**AMENDMENT B**

**Moved:** Councillor Neil Coyle  
**Seconded:** Councillor Helen Hayes

**Insert** new recommendations 4 – 8:

4. Note the reduction in government funding to local authorities for Discretionary Housing Payments of £40 million in 2015/16 and expresses concern that in Southwark the cut of 20% could risk more people becoming homeless. Council assembly notes that the council is already facing significant pressure on temporary accommodation.
5. Note the continuing pressure on residents resulting from central government's welfare reforms and notes that in Southwark discretionary housing payments have been used to provide short-term assistance to people affected by the bedroom tax, the benefit cap and other welfare changes.
6. Therefore call on the cabinet to review the criteria of the council's Welfare Hardship Fund to include homelessness prevention, in order to mitigate the government cuts to Discretionary Housing Payments and to support our most vulnerable residents facing the threat of homelessness.
7. Also note the popularity of the new Neighbourhoods Fund providing a flexible opportunity for truly local decision making by ward councillors and community councils.
8. Therefore agree to increase the Neighbourhood Fund from £542,000 to £630,000 (total £30,000 per ward) and instructs the strategic director of finance and corporate strategy to make appropriate allocations to fund this from reserves in 2015/16 (£88,000) and to ensure that provision is made in the General Fund budget in future years.

Renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

**AMENDMENT C**

**Moved:** Councillor Michael Mitchell  
**Seconded:** Councillor Jane Lyons

In paragraph 1 line 1 after "cabinet" **insert** "as amended by this amendment attached as Appendix 1".

In paragraph 1 line 2 **delete** "£282.3m" and **insert** "£280.7m". **Delete** "nil" and **insert** "2%".

In paragraph 1 line 3 **delete** "increase" and **insert** "reduction".

## APPENDIX 1

Dept	Sub Dept	Description	Proposal in paper £'000	Conservative proposal £'000	Conservative improvement £'000	Reason
Planning and Transport		Initiate a Pedestrian Strategy		50	50	The council needs to give greater priority for both young and old in our community for whom walking in the borough is a key part of their daily life.
Environment	Public realm - Asset Management	Increase proactive maintenance of highways		200	200	The council must do more to maintain and enhance the highways for which it has responsibility
Communities	Engagement	Initiate a review of the council's public consultation processes		50	50	Recent consultations in the south of the borough have been inadequately handled leading to antipathy towards the Council. Current practice needs to be reviewed to ensure repeat performances are avoided.
Communities	Community Councils	Restore planning powers and appointment of school governors to Community Councils		150	150	Restore local decision making to the community councils and improve local accountability.
Environment	Community Safety & Enforcement	Take up the offer from MOPAC to fund an additional sergeant and 5 PCs under the "buy one get one free scheme"		206	206	The addition of 6 extra officers in the south west cluster is a significant confidence boosting measure for the Dulwich area and demonstrates the council's commitment to reducing crime and anti social behaviour.



Dept	Sub Dept	Description	Proposal in paper £'000	Conservative proposal £'000	Conservative improvement £'000	Reason
Communities		Cease the publication of "Southwark Life"		(108)	(108)	Cease publication of this superfluous magazine
Chief Executive	Human Resources	Council employees paid for trade union activities	(40)	(90)	(50)	The Council needs to take further steps to reduce this burden on the council tax payer.
Finance and Corporate Services	Contingency	Experience shows that the council is consistently over prudent in setting the contingency	4,000	1,902	(2,098)	Given the Council Tax bill is one of the largest faced by Southwark taxpayers every year it is better that the council does all it can to reduce the expense.
<b>Total net changes on the budget</b>			<b>3,960</b>	<b>2,360</b>	<b>(1,600)</b>	
<b>The reduction in spending will allow the Council to reduce the Council Tax by 2%</b>						

**AMENDMENT D**

**Moved:** Councillor Adele Morris  
**Seconded:** Councillor David Hubber

**Insert** new paragraphs 1 - 4:

1. The Liberal Democrats have an ambitious vision for the future of Southwark, prioritising affordable housing, health, jobs and apprenticeships. We are also fighting for better transport and more opportunities for young people and older residents and we are reversing Labour's short-sighted green cuts.
2. Liberal Democrat councillors have identified many areas where the council can save money, deliver better value, as well as generate extra income. This will ensure that the council can provide quality services for residents in the borough. Our proposals will help residents secure the jobs and homes they need, help boost local economic growth, while improving health and the local environment.
3. The Labour-run council in Southwark complain about government cuts, without acknowledging that it was the last Labour government which ensured that there was 'no money left' and that Ed Miliband MP has confirmed there will be further cuts to local councils if Labour are involved in the next government.
4. The Labour council also sits on huge reserves, putting millions into contingency funds which are never spent and failing to collect the council tax and business rates which are owed.
5. The Liberal Democrats will put homes, jobs and health at the heart of the council's budget, securing a stronger local economy, fairer communities for all and opportunity for everyone, as set out in Appendix A.

Renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

## APPENDIX A

## Savings

Item	Description	2015/16
		£ 000
Reduce contingency to £1m	<i>Labour have stashed £24m into contingency funds in the last five years, even though they have only used £80,000 of these funds in this time. This year, Liberal Democrats will put £1 million aside instead of £4 million so that more can be spent on homes, jobs and health, rather than putting millions more into the bank.</i>	3,000
Cut council spin	<i>Marketing, rebranding and publicity budgets total nearly £1m. As well as reducing general communications budgets, we will scrap Southwark Life altogether.</i>	300
Delete two Cabinet posts and all four Deputy Cabinet member posts	<i>Labour council bosses have not seen any cuts to their own salaries. Liberal Democrats will cut two Cabinet posts and all four of the Deputy Cabinet Member posts which have been invented in the last four years.</i>	78
Cut council catering	<i>It is not right that the council continues to spend over £400,000 a year on catering and refreshments for meetings and events. The Liberal Democrats will reduce this budget so that food and drink are only paid for by the council when absolutely necessary and explore opportunities for sponsorship.</i>	200
Make council salaries fairer and more transparent	<i>The council is finally reviewing the bonus system following calls from the Liberal Democrats to do so. However, we believe that this should also review and make savings in the current confusing system of extra benefits, such as car leases and gym memberships, which are never paid to more junior, front line officers and which make senior salaries less transparent.</i>	50
Cut consultant fees by 10%	<i>In the context of big cutbacks across council departments, the council should not be spending £2.7m a year on fees for expensive consultants. Liberal Democrats will reduce this budget by 10% in 2015/16, with a view to cutting it further in future years, providing more cost-effective internal services if necessary</i>	270
Cut agency staff costs by 10%	<i>The council is wasting money by using expensive agency staff to fill staffing gaps. Vacant posts should either be filled permanently or deleted. Liberal Democrats will reduce agency spend by 10% in 2015/16, with a view to cutting it further year-on-year, providing more cost-effective paid council staff instead where appropriate. Liberal Democrats are also calling for a full review of the council's current agency staff profile and recruitment policy.</i>	1,500
Reduce energy costs and install photovoltaic panels	<i>Energy costs form a large part of the council's budget. Liberal Democrats would therefore expand this Invest to Save scheme with a rolling programme of photovoltaic panel installation across the council's estate to reduce the overall energy bill and reduce carbon emissions.</i>	186
Reduce administration costs across the Council	<i>With the increasing use of technology across the organisation, Liberal Democrats would require all departments to achieve a reduction in photocopying/printing/stationery/postage costs.</i>	300
<b>Total savings</b>		<b>5,884</b>

**Revenue**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
		<b>£ 000</b>
Increase council tax collection rate	<i>Council Tax performance in 2015/16 should be anticipated to be higher than the collection rate agreed in January 2015. The budget proposals include £620k for this, to be managed in-year by careful monitoring and consequential accounting transactions</i>	620
Impose levies on bars and pubs operating late at night	<i>Bars and pubs should not disturb their neighbours, so the Liberal Democrats will impose a levy on those operating after midnight and use the revenue in that community.</i>	50
Increase council tax raised from long-term empty and second homes	<i>Liberal Democrats believe that the Council can do more to increase the amount of council tax collected from long-term empty private and second homes in the borough and when appropriate will review the exemptions.</i>	50
<b>Total revenue</b>		720
<b>Total savings and revenue</b>		<b>6,604</b>
<b>Balance</b>	Savings + revenue - commitments	

## Commitments

Item	Description	2015/16
		£ 000
Fighting for affordable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the capacity of the planning department to stand up to developers and fight for 1 in 3 homes in every scheme to be affordable.</li> <li>• Give officers extra time and training to persuade developers to market new developments locally in Southwark, not abroad as investments.</li> <li>• Fund an Empty Homes study with Empty Homes Officers</li> </ul>	600
Fighting for the NHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spend council money on giving mental health the same priority as physical health, whether it's in the housing department or in support for the voluntary sector</li> <li>• Fund specialised post-diagnosis support and advice for people who have been diagnosed with dementia</li> <li>• Fund marketing and publicity activities to promote the Big White Wall digital mental health service, which is available to all Southwark residents</li> </ul>	1,000
Fighting for jobs and apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit dedicated council officers to help local employers create new apprenticeships and provide quality work experience for school students</li> <li>• Fund urgent training and outreach so all Southwark residents can access apprenticeships</li> <li>• Support new businesses and jobs this year by providing office space</li> </ul>	1,800
Fighting for green jobs in transport improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund a working party to build on the success of campaigns by Simon Hughes MP and Liberal Democrat councillors for projects recently given support by the Government, including the Bakerloo Line Extension, the new Rotherhithe River Pier and the Brunel Bridge.</li> <li>• Focus council resources on making sure that these major infrastructure projects benefit Southwark residents through more local jobs as well as better and greener transport.</li> <li>• Fund dedicated cycle officers at the council to ensure the Cycle Hire Scheme is extended further east and south throughout the borough and implement the cycle strategy.</li> </ul>	448
Fighting for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reverse Labour's cuts to children in care and stop children in care going missing and siblings being separated</li> <li>• Give youth workers support and resources to help get young people into jobs and training</li> <li>• Help parents with the cost of childcare</li> </ul>	2,000
Fighting for older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund active retirement opportunities, day centres and lay inspectors.</li> <li>• Pay for council officers or voluntary sector partners to meet regularly with all Southwark residents over 60 to support extra needs and tackle isolation.</li> </ul>	400
Fighting for the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reverse Labour's short-sighted cuts to food waste bags, the graffiti team and other environmental cuts.</li> <li>• Fund a feasibility study to explore options to replace street lighting with LED street lighting as part of the 'invest to save' project</li> </ul>	356
<b>Total commitments</b>		<b>6,604</b>

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**ITEM 3.1: Setting the Council Tax 2015/16** (see pages 173-185 of the main agenda)

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**AMENDMENT E**

**Moved:** Councillor Victoria Mills

**Seconded:** Councillor Fiona Colley

**Insert** new recommendation 8:

8. That council assembly notes that under delegated authority the strategic director for finance and corporate services will amend the council's Section 13A Discretionary relief policy to include a 100% exemption from Council Tax for those classed as having 'personal circumstances' as Southwark registered foster carers fostering Southwark children.

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**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN) (AMENDMENTS)  
MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014/15**

**NOTE:** Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to  
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