

Council Assembly

Wednesday 22 February 2023

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Supplemental Agenda no. 2

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Contact

Virginia Wynn-Jones, Andrew Weir, on 020 7525 7055 or 020 7525 7222 or email:
virginia.wynn-jones@southwark.gov.uk; andrew.weir@southwark.gov.uk;
constitutional.team@southwark.gov.uk
Webpage: <http://www.southwark.gov.uk>

Date: 20 February 2023

Item No. 2.1	Classification: Open	Date: 22 February 2023	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Questions on Reports – 2.1 Policy and Resources Strategy 2023-24: Revenue Budget	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Responses to questions on reports will be circulated around the council chamber on the evening of the meeting.

1. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR ELLIE CUMBO

Many of our residents are struggling with the cost of living and particularly rising fuel bills. It is vital the council provides support and advice to residents. This Budget report contains a commitment of £100, 000 for the Energy Support Savers Scheme; could the cabinet member tell us more about this scheme?

2. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR REGINALD POPOOLA

Could the Cabinet member please let the assembly know how the increase in energy costs and inflation has affected this budget?

3. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD

The Government continue to provide only a one year settlement, how does this impact on the plans to build long-term budgets?

4. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR MARGY NEWENS

What progress has the council made in allocating the Climate Emergency capital fund?

5. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JOSEPH VAMBE

Can you give assurances that the budget is delivering Streets for People and supports the aspiration of the Streets for People Cabinet report passed on December 6 2022?

6. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR SUZANNE ABACHOR

As households bill are expected to continue to rise in the coming year, what council tax support is being provided for low income families?

7. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has announced he will provide £130m to offer free school meals to all primary school age children for a year. As Southwark already offers this provision and will, will the cabinet member commit to using any additional funds to expand free school meals to secondary school pupils?

8. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR RACHEL BENTLEY

Southwark Council appears to be pursuing a strategy of using public parks for commercial gain. How much money was raised from commercial use of parks last year? What are the projected funds from the commercialisation of public parks in the borough this coming year? How much money does the events team need to generate to cover the costs of the team?

9. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, EQUALITIES AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JANE SALMON

Southwark's estates and streets are already blighted by fly-tipping and raising the bulky waste charge to £35, as outlined in budget line 213, will potentially worsen this situation. What are you doing to improve communication to residents around how to dispose of waste responsibly? How many fines were issued for fly-tipping in the past year? And what is your strategy for increasing action against flytippers?

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
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COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2023****AMENDMENTS**

ITEM 2.1: POLICY AND RESOURCES STRATEGY 2023-24 - REVENUE BUDGET (see pages 1-355 of supplemental agenda no.1)

AMENDMENT A – Shouldering the Council Tax Burden for Residents**Moved:** Councillor Adam Hood**Seconded:** Councillor Rachel Bentley

1. Council assembly notes that:
 - a. The 2023/24 budget is being set in a time of political and economic turmoil.
 - b. Years of regressive austerity from inept and uncaring Conservative Governments have been exacerbated by international events leaving the UK facing an unprecedented cost of living crisis that is hitting the most vulnerable in our society hardest.
 - c. The council is under considerable financial pressure but, given the unsustainable and precarious financial situation of many residents in this economic climate, Southwark must think radically to ensure it does not worsen that situation for residents by increasing their council tax burden.
 - d. The IMF forecasts that the UK economy will shrink this year, suggesting there will be little to no respite from rising costs, record inflation and stagnating wages.
 - e. Southwark must ensure it can help residents through, what we hope to be, the final financial year of this disastrous Conservative government.
2. Council assembly further notes that:
 - a. Southwark is planning to raise council tax by the maximum 4.99%
 - b. Council tax is a regressive tax based on property valuations from 1991.
 - c. Southwark must make the changes it can to its council tax policy while lobbying central government for reform in order to make taxation in our borough as fair as possible.

- d. The Lib Dem group in Southwark will be calling for a reduction in the timescale required to attach the full council tax premium to empty homes.
3. Council assembly acknowledges that:
 - a. Southwark Labour presides over an abundance of council waste and is unambitious regarding income generation.
 - b. Southwark paid out over £450,000 last year in Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) with some committee chairs earning over £1,000 per meeting.
 - c. Southwark Labour insists on keeping a bloated and convoluted cabinet. Eight cabinet members (one below the maximum) and four deputy cabinet members costs £317,448 to taxpaying residents.
 - d. Labour has spent £66,804 rewarding cabinet members who have lost their positions with golden goodbyes. No other council offers these payments and Southwark Labour has repeatedly refused calls for them to be scrapped.
 - e. Southwark Council has an abundance of underused commercial and office space that can be must be better utilised to generate revenue that can be given back to struggling residents.
 - f. The recent embarrassing sandwich scandal, where £900 was spent on catering for 25 attendees, lays bare the wasteful nature of Southwark Labour's spending. Southwark Council must reduce internal expenditure on unnecessary and inflated budgets in order pass those savings on to the people of Southwark.
 4. Therefore, council assembly resolves to:
 - a. Go ahead with the 4.99% council tax rise in order to ensure no loss of future revenue due to a reduced council tax base.
 - b. Use reserve contributions alongside additional savings, efficiencies and income generation to generate £6.5m (the equivalent value to the 4.99% council tax rise) which can be given back to residents as a cost of living rebate.
 - c. Undertake consultation with residents as to nature of this rebate, prioritising fairness in its distribution and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable groups.
 - d. Consider a multitude of options for this rebate, including an opt-in/voluntary scheme for which residents will apply for the rebate, giving opportunity for residents to refuse the rebate and free up additional council resources.

- e. Use the unallocated 'Leaving European Union risk' reserve to provide £2,459,000 of the rebate.
- f. Cut down on council waste and undertake innovative income generation schemes to generate a further £4,121,500.

Insert the following budget line into Appendix B (Efficiencies and Improved Use of Resources):	Insert the following budget line into Appendix D (Savings Impact on Service):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the forecast spend of £1.5m on photocopying, printing, stationary and postage by 50% - £750k • Review use of agency staff and consultants with a view to reducing overall spend on external staff - £400k • Improving the efficiency of Southwark's extensive tree maintenance programme, applying more effective approaches to avoid annual crown reduction, pruning, pollarding, crown removals, and focus on nurturing and planting - £288k • Review Southwark's communications expenditure with view to reducing amount spent on non-essential communications from cabinet office or councillors - £240k • Reduce cabinet to four members, reflecting the departmental structure of the cabinet - £152.5 • Reduce the council catering and refreshments budget by 50% - £90k • Find efficiencies and alternatives in order to reduce the projected 2023/24 spend on leased commercial vehicles by 10% - £85k • Reduce all SRAs by 10% - £45k • Scrap all four deputy cabinet positions - £12.5k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cease production and distribution of the 'Southwark Life' magazine - £97.5k • Scrap 'loss of office payments' as detailed in sections 49-52 of the Members Allowances Scheme - £9k

Insert the following budget line into Appendix C (Income Generation):	Insert the following budget line into Appendix E (Commitments):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise the full cost of the 'Leaving European Union Risk' reserve - £2.459m • Better utilise existing office and commercial space owned by the council, generating additional revenue by renting out underutilised office and commercial space to external organisation - £1m • Introducing a pilot voluntary 'Tourist Tax' scheme within which tourists are encouraged to pay a small additional charge when paying for a hotel room in Southwark - £400k • Review planning application processes for large developments with a view to increasing all associated charges in order to generate more revenue - £200k • Increase scrapping and selling of unused and abandoned cars through additional enforcement - £4k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a fund worth the full value of the 4.99% council tax rise which can be distributed to residents as a cost of living support payment after consultation - £6.5m
Remove the following budget lines from Appendix E (Commitments):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line 433: To support the achievement of the delivery plan and other key priorities within the department - £348k 	

Chief Finance Officer Assurance on robustness of budget estimates

The statutory section 151 officer has confirmed that these proposals are lawful and implementable and overall do not impact on the total budget requirement for 2023/24. However the proposals by nature of their of their scale and complexity create a number of risks and challenges.

This amendment proposes, through a combination of additional efficiency savings, additional income targets and one off contributions from reserves that additional resources be made available to the Council's Cost of Living Fund. These resources amount to the estimated increase in Council Tax and Council Tax Precepts, included within the budget recommended to Council Assembly (£6.58m).

Further, the amendment proposes that a new scheme be prepared that allows for these resources to be returned to Southwark residents. The scheme will

need more detailed planning, design and consultation as necessary and, if appropriate, legal advice will need to be taken.

Given the scale of the collective challenges, this amendment carries significant risk although it is noted that there is no intention of interrupting the council tax setting or collection process. Rather the scheme is intended to offer a 'rebate in kind' for residents of the borough. Planning will also be needed to ensure the delivery of new income generation and savings targets.

Given the complexity of some of the proposals (e.g. the 'pilot voluntary tourist tax scheme'; potential staffing implications for the review of agency and consultants; review of communications expenditure; mobilisation of letting income from office space; etc.), it may be impractical to expect full delivery of these targets in 2023/24. Regular review will be required as part of budget monitoring throughout the year to ensure that targets are being met and if necessary the scheme may need to be adjusted accordingly. In the case of any shortfall in the targeted savings and income, calls will be necessary on corporate contingency and earmarked reserves to mitigate the risk.

The s151 Officer confirms that, subject to the agreement to this amendment by Council Assembly, plans will need to be put in place immediately to implement the proposals as early as practicable in 2023-24.

AMENDMENT B – Protecting Key Services for Vulnerable Groups

Moved: Councillor Emily Tester

Seconded: Councillor David Watson

1. Council assembly notes that:
 - a. Southwark’s 2023/24 budget contains huge cuts to services relied upon by vulnerable groups in Southwark.
 - b. The efficiencies made to the ‘short breaks provision’ has been highlighted by effected residents and members as a reckless cut to a service that, for the carers and vulnerable residents who rely on it, there is no sufficient alternative.
 - c. The children and families budget is being reduced by a net £3.99m at a time where struggling residents need as much support as possible from the council.
 - d. A number of these cuts have been identified by the council’s own Cumulative Equality Assessment as having potential or definite “negative impacts” on service users.
 - e. Additionally, the Equalities and Human Rights Panel (EHRP), whose members include representatives from Community Southwark and Citizens Advice, has raised serious concerns about the effect of these proposed cuts on vulnerable groups.
 - f. The voluntary sector is currently filling the huge gaps in Southwark’s support network and the burden on them will only be increased as services are cut further.
2. Council assembly further notes that:
 - a. Since the council originally introduced a charge for bulky waste in 2015, Southwark has become the eleventh worst local authority for fly-tipping in the country.
 - b. The budget proposes to increase the bulky waste charge by a further £10. This has the potential to further deter residents from using the council services, resulting in a further increase to fly-tipping.
3. Council assembly resolves to:
 - a. Remove entirely the proposed cut to short breaks provision in the 2023/24 budget of £600,000
 - b. Remove all proposed cuts to children and families service which have been identified as having definite or potential negative impacts on service users in the cumulative equality assessment or

were raised as concerns by the Equality and Human Rights Panel. These cuts total £1,019,000.

- c. Replace the current proposal for voluntary sector support with an increased commitment of £400,000 from revenue and an additional one off reserve contribution of £100,000 which will be allocated in cooperation with voluntary sector organisations.
- d. Reverse the £10 increase to the bulky waste charge.
- e. To generate £1,350,000 additional revenue in order to maintain these vital services through increased enforcement of fly-tipping and idling offenses in order to generate additional, increased parking and commercial waste charges, marginally increased council tax collection, an increased on-street advertising revenue target and ceasing use of the herbicide glyphosate.
- f. To reinstate the £3m reserve contribution to the budget outlined in reports to February cabinet, using the additional £500,000 to maintain vital services.

Remove the following budget line into Appendix B (Efficiencies and Improved Use of Resources):	Remove the following budget line into Appendix C (Savings Impact on Service):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 106: Reducing PAUSE service capacity - £59k • 107: Reducing Clinical Service capacity - £78k • 113: Redistribution of caseload capacity across Safeguarding & Corporate Parenting Services - £110k • 120: Redesign Children & Family Centre Delivery Model - £100k • 122: Restructure Family Early Help Delivery Model - £150k • 125: Reduce capacity within Keeping Families Together Team - £54k • 175: Review of short breaks provision though greater use of direct payments, voluntary sector provision and spot purchased respite care - £600k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 305: Reduce Clinical Service Capacity - £140k • 308: Reduction in Youth Offending Service - £110k • 309: Reduce Family Group Conferencing Service - £60k • 310: Downsizing Council Parenting Team - £58k
Insert the following budget line into Appendix D (Savings Impact on Service):	Remove the following budget line into Appendix C (Income Generation):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cease use and purchase of the herbicide glyphosate - £4k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 213: Increase bulky waste charge from £25 to £35 per booking, maintaining a low fee

	compared with the London average - £100k
Insert the following budget line into Appendix C (Income Generation):	Insert the following budget lines from Appendix E (Commitments):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review council tax collection processes with a view to generate additional revenue from increased collection focussing on higher band, empty and second properties - £600k Reinstate the £3m reserve contribution to the budget as was proposed in the February cabinet report - £500k Increase the council's current target for revenue generated by on-street advertising - £500k Increase parking charges from 80p to £2.50 an hour - £116k Increase commercial waste service charges to generate £1.25m - £70k Increase enforcement of idling offenses, generating additional revenue from increased volume of FPNs - £30k Increase PCN from flytipping to £126,000 (peak collection with inflation) - £30k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a voluntary sector support fund that will be allocated in cooperation with voluntary sector organisations - £400k Utilise the 'Community Hub – Voluntary Sector Support' reserve to fund a one-off additional increase to voluntary sector support in 23/24 - £100k
Remove the following budget lines from Appendix E (Commitments):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 448: Provision to receive bids to alleviate excessive inflationary pressures in the Voluntary Sector - £200k 	

Chief Finance Officer assurance on robustness of budget estimates

The statutory section 151 officer has confirmed that these proposals are lawful and may be implementable. He also recognises that the proposal will need appropriate risk management throughout the year as the proposals are challenging.

This amendment proposes to reverse a number of savings proposals reported to Council Assembly and to add a number of commitments. It is proposed that these changes will be funded through some challenging additional income generation targets, including achieving levels of council tax collection above

the current target. It also proposes that an additional contribution from general fund reserves should be reinstated to a level reported to Cabinet prior to the announcement of the final Government settlement.

Collectively, these proposals create significant risk to the 2023-24 budget and are not in line with the recommendations of the s151 officer as set out to Council Assembly, especially with regard to collection rates, one off contributions from reserves and income targets.

He confirms that, subject to the agreement to this amendment by Council Assembly, plans will need to be put in place to implement the proposals as early as practicable in 2023-24. Given the risks involved in delivery, there may be a need to call down resources from corporate contingency or financial risk reserves which will not then be available for other purposes.

AMENDMENT C – Expanding Cycle Hire to the Whole Borough

Moved: Councillor Graham Neale

Seconded: Councillor Hamish McCallum

1. Council assembly notes that:
 - a. Facilitating and encouraging active travel is key to tackling the climate emergency and improving air quality.
 - b. Research from Imperial College London and Oxford University revealed that choosing to walk or cycle rather than drive just once a day can reduce personal carbon footprint by half a tonne per year.
 - c. Cycle hire schemes, such as TfL's Santander Cycles, are an affordable and accessible way of helping residents choose active travel over driving.
 - d. The Santander Cycles hire scheme is widely used across London and demand continues to grow. 2022 saw a record breaking 11,506,889 hires, half a million more than 2021.
2. Council assembly welcomes that:
 - a. Southwark recently invested £705,150 in seven new cycle hire docks.
3. Council assembly also acknowledges that:
 - a. Southwark's investment in the cycle hire scheme has been wholly inadequate, especially compared with neighbouring Lambeth Council.
 - b. Despite the recent investment, provision of Santander Cycles only goes as far south as Burgess Park and does not extend to Surrey Docks.
 - c. The provision must be expanded with more docks allowing residents throughout the borough access to an affordable active travel option.
4. Council assembly resolves to:
 - a. Use £3.5m from the 'Highways and Parking Climate Emergency Projects' reserve to invest in approximately 32 new Santander Cycles docking stations, sufficient to expand the scheme throughout the entire borough.

Insert following budget line into appendix E (Commitments):

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding to TfL for 32 new Santander Cycles docking stations in Southwark using contributions from the Highways and Parking Climate |
|--|

Emergency projects reserve - £3.5m

Chief Finance Officer assurance on robustness of budget estimates

The statutory section 151 officer has confirmed that these proposals are lawful and implementable and overall do not impact on the total budget requirement for 2023-24. He confirms that, subject to the agreement to this amendment by Council Assembly, plans will need to be put in place to implement the proposals as early as practicable in 2023-24.

It is also noted that the detailed proposals may have either revenue or capital implications but that, given the source of the funding through the earmarked reserve, this does not impact on the robustness of this amendment. However any variations to the estimated cost of the project may lead to an increase or decrease in the number of docking stations and / or require a variation to the draw down from the reserve. Such a variation would be subject to normal Council approval processes.

AMENDMENT D – Right to food – Free School Meals

Moved: Councillor Jasmine Ali

Seconded: Councillor Chloe Tomlinson

To insert after paragraph 6 of the Policy and Resources Strategy, and renumber all subsequent points accordingly:

7. Council assembly notes that:
 - a. Southwark Council has led the way in improving access to healthy affordable food. We have made this a priority because no one should go hungry, yet research by the Food Foundation has found that across our country 9.7 million adults (18.4% of households) have experienced food insecurity in the past month. This situation is getting worse, with one in four households with children experiencing food insecurity in September 2022, a 50% increase since April. In Southwark, foodbank use has increased four-fold since 2020. To end hunger in Southwark the council is:
 - i. Making Southwark a Right to Food borough by working with local businesses, community groups and schools to ensure everyone in Southwark has access to healthy, affordable food. This work is being taken forward through our Food Security Action Plan and Southwark Food Action Alliance.
 - ii. Supporting the development of community fridge, pantry and neighbourhood food models to help provide more dignity and community food resilience, working collaboratively with over 60 organisations locally.
 - iii. Delivering free healthy school meals (FHSM) for all primary and nursery school children. Southwark has now delivered FHSM for over a decade and remains one of only five councils in England to have made school meals free for all primary school children.
 - iv. We have delivered Free Healthy Meals in our nurseries for over five years
 - v. The results of Free School Meals in all primary schools the results have been phenomenal. Over the last ten years our schools have gone from fourth bottom to 98% Ofsted good or outstanding.
 - vi. The universal school meals programme is without question a fundamental part of our school improvement journey.
 - vii. It is widely known how beneficial a healthy lunchtime meal is for children, not only in protecting their health, but also in

setting the foundations for improved behaviour and success with their studies.

- viii. Pilot studies of universal free school meals in the UK noted improved academic attainment, particularly for pupils from less affluent families:
 - Pupils made between four and eight weeks' more progress than expected
 - 23% increase in the number of children eating vegetables at lunchtime and
 - 8% reduction in children consuming crisps and soft drinks
- ix. Free School Meals improves pupil's concentration and behaviour in class
- x. Increases the amount of fruit and vegetables, and reduces the amount of sugar and salt, consumed by pupils at lunchtime and encourages children to try new food.
- xi. Ensuring school meals are healthy and nutritious by increasing funding to £2.41 per primary pupil (a rise from £1.90).
- xii. Providing free school meals in the holidays for low-income families. Southwark led the way providing these meals to help end hunger during the holidays, and has continued to provide them when many councils have not.
- xiii. Southwark Labour led the way in Lobbying Government to fund universal primary free school meals and increase the income threshold for eligibility of free school meals for secondary aged pupils. This includes adding our voice to national campaigns, including the National Education Union's 'Free School Meals for All' campaign, and working with politicians leading the campaign in Parliament.
- xiv. Running Food and Fun holiday programmes of healthy food and activities for school-aged children and families experiencing hardship.

8. Council assembly further notes that:

- a. The Mayor of London is to be applauded for following Southwark's example and announcing that the Greater London Authority (GLA) will fund the extension of free school meals for all children at London primary schools for the 2023/4 school year. This will mean the Council will no longer need to fund primary free school meals during this period.

- b. Southwark intervention to Free School meals removes stigma and enables children's educational outcomes to be as good, and often better than, their counterparts in well-heeled boroughs.
- c. When the Conservatives voted to end holiday free school meals in 2020, Southwark Council was one of the first local authorities to join Marcus Rashford's campaign while stepping up and taking swift action to tackle holiday hunger.
- d. In contrast, the government has yet to confirm Southwark's allocation of the Household Support Fund. As the council has used this funding to finance holiday free school meals the government has left low-income families with no certainty on whether these meals will be provided for them this Easter and for the rest of 2023/24.
- e. Council assembly therefore resolves to:
 - i. Invest in a major new pilot programme to ensure all students at Southwark secondary schools have access to healthy nutritious food. We will work with schools, young people and families to develop a new programme to ensure secondary students from low-income families do not go hungry. This commitment will be funded through the saving to the council that will result from the GLA paying for free primary school meals in 2023/24. The pilot will proceed once the council has received full confirmation of funding from the GLA and will be funded from existing council budgets for free school meals.
 - ii. Act to end holiday hunger, investing £3 million to extend our holiday free school meals programme. Southwark led the way funding free school meals during the holidays for low-income families. Now we will guarantee these meals for every holiday up to and including Easter 2024 so all qualifying children and young people have the cost of their weekday lunches covered. This will be funded from the council's Cost of Living Fund which will be supplemented by a transfer of reserves (£3m) from the Fair Funding and Levelling Up reserve.

Chief Finance Officer assurance on robustness of budget estimates

The statutory section 151 officer has confirmed that these proposals are lawful and implementable and overall do not impact on the total budget requirement for 2023/24. He confirms that, subject to the agreement to this amendment by Council Assembly, plans will need to be put in place to implement the proposals as early as practicable in 2023-24.

AMENDMENT E**Moved:** Councillor Kimberly McIntosh**Seconded:** Councillor John Batteson

To insert after paragraph 6 of the Policy and Resources Strategy, and renumber all subsequent points accordingly:

Cost of living

7. Council assembly notes that:

- a. The Council is on residents' sides during the cost of living crisis. We have made this our top priority and have put in place one of the most comprehensive support packages in the country. To support Southwark residents through this crisis the council has:
 - i. Distributed over £30m of support for those in greatest need through our Southwark Cost of Living Fund and other initiatives
 - ii. Helped over 11,000 residents on low incomes by providing a payment of £100 each to help with the rising cost of living.
 - iii. Launched a new Southwark Energy Savers Service so people on low incomes can access the best advice to keep their bills down, with long-term funding for this service secured through this budget.
 - iv. Continued to provide free help for Southwark residents to get a job and build a career, having helped over 12,000 people into work and created over 4,000 apprenticeships, more than any other London borough
 - v. Put in place support through the council's local support team and by funding Citizens Advice Southwark to ensure local people do not miss out on social security payments they are entitled to.
 - vi. Established a Community Referral Pathway, working with local community groups, schools and public services to ensure all of this support reaches those most in need, we expect that more than fifteen thousand households will have been referred and received support through this pathway this year
 - vii. Ensured Southwark's council tax remains one of the lowest in London
 - viii. Maintained one of the most supportive Council Tax Reduction Schemes in the country, providing a discount of up to 100%

for low-income households. Southwark Council had to step in to provide this vital help with council tax after the coalition government ended Council Tax Benefit.

8. Council assembly further notes that:
 - a. The council's Cost of Living Fund payments of £100 to households facing financial hardship have been a lifeline for thousands of Southwark residents, however this support is not currently funded beyond March 2023.
 - b. The cost of living crisis has been made more acute due to low pay, conditions and job security in some sectors of our economy. Ensuring fair pay and conditions for all, including a living wage, is fundamental to building an economy where everyone can afford the essentials in life.
 - c. Trade unions have a vital role to play in achieving this. Research by the TUC has found that workers who are members of a trade union, on average, receive higher pay than non-members, better sickness and pension benefits, more paid holiday and the right to more flexible working hours. However, public awareness of the benefits of trade union membership is low.

9. Council assembly therefore resolves to:
 - a. Extend our help for Southwark residents hardest hit by the cost of living crisis, supporting an additional 20,000 households facing financial hardship with £100 Cost of Living awards, funded from the council's Cost of Living Fund, which will be supplemented by a transfer of £2 million from the Fair Funding Review & Levelling Up reserve.
 - b. Invest £100,000 to launch an older people's food security pilot to tackle food poverty amongst our older residents. This will be funded from the Public Health reserve.
 - c. Establish a new Southwark Living Wage Unit, tasked with doubling the number of Southwark employers who pay at least the London Living Wage to all their staff. Working with the Living Wage Foundation, trade unions and community groups to make the case to employers. This unit will be funded for three years by a one of transfer off £250k over three years from the Economic Risk reserve.
 - d. Champion workers' rights, investing £50,000 to deliver a major public awareness campaign to make sure Southwark residents know their rights at work and the benefits of trade union membership. The fund will be created by transferring balances from the Leaving European Union Risk reserve.

Southwark 2030 fund

10. Council assembly notes:

- a. This council continues to be ambitious for the long-term future of our residents and borough and is committed to working with local people to set shared ambitions for Southwark and agree shared plans to deliver that change. That is why we have launched Southwark 2030, to bring local people, community groups, businesses and public services together to share ideas and hopes, so we that we can work together to deliver the very best. Hundreds of Southwark residents have already taken part, with many more opportunities for local people to get involved over the coming weeks.
- b. Through the initial sessions, residents have expressed their view that we have made great strides in improving our borough for everyone, driving up standards in education, building thousands of new council homes, and nurturing our parks and open spaces. A recent YouGov poll on Levelling Up also named Southwark as one of only four council areas in Britain where people were most likely to say they felt their local area had improved in recent years. However, in common with the rest of our city we are also a place of contrast. Inequalities in health, housing, income and access to opportunities remain, despite efforts to reduce them. Through two crises – COVID-19 and cost of living – we have seen the disproportionate impact on some of our residents, especially those from Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities, and those on lower incomes. As we look ahead to the future, we – the council, community groups, businesses and local organisations – want our borough to be ready to grasp every opportunity, and strong enough to weather any future crises.

11. Council assembly therefore resolves to:

- a. Use Southwark 2030 to create a bright future for our borough, raising our ambition again on the fairer, greener and safer borough we can deliver together. Setting out a shared vision for Southwark by 2030, and a renewed plan to get there.
- b. Create a £3 million Southwark 2030 Fund to invest in projects that support this vision for our borough. These projects will be inspired by the needs and desires of residents as identified through Southwark 2030, turning ideas into reality. This fund will be created by transferring balances from the Leaving European Union Risk reserve (£2.3million) and the London Devolution reserve (£700,000).

Streets for People

12. Council assembly notes:

- a. The council will make our streets safer, greener and healthier so wherever you are travelling across Southwark you can get there easily on foot, public transport or cycle. The climate emergency is one of the biggest challenges we face with transport being the second largest source of carbon emission from our borough. Our recent Climate Emergency Citizens Jury identified 'making walking great again' as the number one priority. We will be therefore taking urgent action, putting the environment, carbon reduction, recycling and waste removal at the heart of everything we do as a council to create Streets for People.

13. Council assembly further notes that:

- a. The council is committed to improving air quality and road safety at every Southwark school. Making even more roads outside schools car-free at the start and end of the school day, reducing traffic near schools and providing more green screens, trees and air cleaning.
- b. We will work with local communities to design safer, greener and healthier streets for walking and cycling, including safer junctions and crossings, prioritising areas with high health inequalities and low car ownership first.
- c. The Council has been working with residents and businesses to improve the streets of the borough for people.
- d. To make sure we're listening to everyone who travels in Southwark, we're consulting on our Sustainable Transport Strategy 2022-2026.
- e. We have made improvements to cycling, and walking routes and improved accessibility for those wheeling by widening pavements, reducing traffic and making cycle lanes safer.

14. Council assembly resolves to:

- a. Invest £2 million from the Highways and Parking Climate Emergency Projects Reserve, in projects to support fairer, greener safer streets with more active travel, safer school journeys, reduced carbon emissions, better air quality, cleaner streets and town centres. Delivering on our commitment to streets for people. This will cover a range of investments to create more spaces for people and make our streets Greener and Safer for everyone in the borough to use. This investment will help to deliver:
 - i. Safer, greener and healthier streets for walking, scooting and cycling
 - ii. Improved air quality and road safety outside Southwark schools, speeding up the roll out of School Streets

- iii. Equal Pavements that are accessible for all, working with older people, those with disabilities and limited mobility to make sure Southwark's streets are accessible for everyone.
- iv. A Cycle Friendly Borough, with more opportunities for all communities to have access to a bike and cycle training. Creating a new cycling plan to deliver the infrastructure, storage and network of routes for safe cycling for all that are able.
- v. Additional resource to consult, design and deliver neighbourhood parking schemes to support Streets for People, freeing up more kerbside for other uses, green spaces and infrastructure
- vi. Cleaner streets, including enhanced graffiti and fly tipping removal services, capital investment in modern street cleansing equipment, new modern litter bin infrastructure and more places to recycle

Windrush commemoration fund

15. Council assembly notes:

- a. The council is committed to celebrating the diversity and heritage of our borough, including the contributions of the many migrant communities who have shaped Southwark's history and continue to shape our present and future.

16. Council assembly further notes:

- b. The 75th anniversary of the arrival of MV Empire Windrush at the Port of Tilbury on the Thames marks a seminal moment in our nation's shared history. Southwark is immensely proud of the contributions of generations of people from the Caribbean. Since 2018, the council has been committed to supporting those impacted by the Windrush scandal and has called on the Government to provide support, and ensure this support is taken up by all those affected. The council will hold the Government to account on their promise to pay compensation, and we will continue to do all we can to ensure that this atrocity is never forgotten.

17. Council assembly resolves to:

- a. Announce a new commemoration fund to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush. The £75,000 fund will be used to help our community to celebrate and commemorate the date and the contributions to Southwark made by the Windrush generations and generations of people from the

Caribbean. The fund will be created by transferring balances from the Leaving European Union Risk reserve.

Chief Finance Officer assurance on robustness of budget estimates

The statutory section 151 officer has confirmed that these proposals are lawful and implementable and overall do not impact on the total budget requirement for 2023/24. He confirms that, subject to the agreement to this amendment by Council Assembly, plans will need to be put in place to implement the proposals as early as practicable in 2023-24.

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN) (FULL LIST)
MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022/23**

NOTE: Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to
Virginia Wynn-Jones Tel: 020 7525 7055

ONE COPY TO ALL UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED	Copies	To	Copies
<p>Councillors (1 each) Councillor Jasmine Ali Councillor Sunil Chopra Councillor Renata Hamvas Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall Councillor Darren Merrill Councillor Leo Pollak Councillor Sandra Rhule Councillor Martin Seaton Councillor Andy Simmons Councillor Cleo Soanes Councillor Kath Whittam Councillor Kieron Williams</p> <p>Electronic Versions (No hard copy) All other councillors</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>Press</p> <p>Southwark News South London Press</p> <p>Group Offices</p> <p>Jack Beddoe, Labour Group Office Euan Cadzow-Webb, Liberal Democrat Group Office</p> <p>Officers</p> <p>Althea Loderick Duncan Whitfield Doreen Forrester-Brown Chidilim Agada Caroline Bruce David Quirke-Thornton Michael Scorer Sangeeta Leahy</p> <p>Constitutional Team</p> <p>(Copies to Virginia Wynn-Jones, 2nd Floor, Hub 2, Tooley Street)</p> <p>Others</p> <p>Matt Dean, Grant Thornton Ground floor audit office, Tooley Street</p> <p>Total:</p> <p>Last updated: February 2023</p>	<p>by email by email</p> <p>by email by email</p> <p>by email by email by email by email by email by email</p> <p>8</p> <p>by email</p> <p>20</p>