

# Council Assembly

Wednesday 17 July 2024

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## Tabled Items

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Date: 17 July 2024

**SOUTHWARK COUNCIL****COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****(ORDINARY MEETING)****WEDNESDAY 17 JULY 2024****PROGRAMME MOTION**

The order of business and timings for the evening will be as follows:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Business</b>
<b>19:00 – 19:10</b>	<b>1. Preliminary business and announcements</b>
<b>19:10 – 20:10</b>  (20 minutes – 4 minutes' speech)	<b>Themed debate</b> <b>3.1 Community Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southwark and Peckham Citizens</li> <li>• Cathy Deplessis, Southwark Pensioners' Centre</li> <li>• Lizzie Lynch, Appleby Blue</li> <li>• Kelvin Miles and colleagues</li> </ul>
(7 minutes)	<b>3.2 Motion on the Theme</b>
(5 minutes)	1. Councillor Helen Dennis, new homes and sustainable development
(25 minutes)	2. Councillor Emily Tester, opposition spokesperson
(3 minutes)	3. Themed debate open to all other councillors
	4. Cabinet member's right of reply to the debate
<b>20:10 – 20:20</b>	<b>Recess</b>
<b>20:20 – 20:40</b> (4 minutes' speech, question to the cabinet; no questions from members)	<b>4. Deputation requests</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaseholders in the North Peckham Estate</li> <li>• Jenifer Milner, on behalf of shop owners in SE5</li> <li>• Zoe Abrams and Peckham residents</li> </ul>
<b>20:40 – 21:15</b> (5 minutes) (15 minutes) (15 minutes)	<b>5.1 Members' Question Time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late questions</li> <li>• Members' questions to the leader</li> <li>• Members' questions to the cabinet</li> </ul>
<b>21:15 – 22:00</b>	<b>5.2 Motions</b>
	Motion 1 – Declaring a Housing Emergency (LD)
	Motion 2 – Debate Not Hate (Lab)
	Motion 3 – Ending the Lower Road Chaos (LD)
<b>22:00*</b>	<b>6. Reports</b>
	6.1 Proposed Amendments to the Constitution: Human Resources (HR)
	6.2 Pay Policy Statement 2024-25
	6.3 Treasury Management – Outturn 2023-24

\* subject to the guillotine rule; maximum 15 minutes debate per item.

**Note:** Any time left remaining on any item will be rolled into the next items.

That the meeting be conducted as follows:

### **Item 3 - Themed debate**

#### **Community Evidence Submissions**

To receive submissions from the groups listed in the themed section of the agenda:

- Southwark and Peckham Citizens
- Cathy Deplessis, Southwark Pensioners' Centre
- Lizzie Lynch, Appleby Blue
- Kelvin Miles and colleagues

(Four minutes to speak)

#### **Format**

A four minute presentation from the groups.

### **3.1 Motion on the theme**

#### **Themed debate**

To run as listed in the timings above.

### **Item 4 – Deputations**

That the meeting agree to hear deputations from:

- Leaseholders in the North Peckham Estate
- Jenifer Milner, on behalf of shop owners in SE5
- Zoe Abrams and Peckham residents

(Four minutes to speak; deputation question to relevant cabinet member, no questions from members)

### **Item 5.2 General motions:**

Each motion to have a single debate, subject to the guillotine.

**SOUTHWARK COUNCIL****COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****(ORDINARY MEETING)****WEDNESDAY 17 JULY 2024****LATE QUESTION WITH RESPONSE****1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) recently released statistics showing a record 1.6 million children are affected by the cruel 2 child benefit cap, introduced by the Conservatives in 2017. 2,300 households in Southwark are affected.

The Liberal Democrats have consistently advocated for its abolition, locally and nationally. Last year we submitted an amendment to a motion which would have committed the council to also advocating for its abolition, but the Labour group unanimously voted against it.

With a new government and growing calls across the political spectrum to end this policy, will the leader now join me in calling for the Government to scrap the two child benefit cap?

**RESPONSE**

I welcome the new Labour government under Sir Keir Starmer and the speed with which it is unpicking 14 years of Conservative and Liberal Democrat failure. In its first few days this Labour government has scrapped the disgraceful Rwanda scheme, lifted the absurd ban on onshore wind power, re-introduced vital targets for new homes, announced a new sovereign wealth fund and reset the relationship with the NHS to end the junior doctors' strike. There is clearly much more to do. The scale of failure by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat governments over the last fourteen years is unprecedented and it will inevitably take time to rebuild our national economy and public services.

The dismantling of our national social security system by the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives in government has been one of their worst and most harmful failings. I look forward to working with this Labour government to undo that damage and rebuild a fair system.

**SOUTHWARK COUNCIL****COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****(ORDINARY MEETING)****WEDNESDAY 17 JULY 2024****MEMBERS' QUESTIONS WITH RESPONSES****1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR JASON OCHERE**

Can the Leader provide an update on the progress being made in improving our repairs service?

**RESPONSE**

We have a duty to provide a repairs service that our residents can trust, and we have made this a top priority. We know that we still have important work to do in this area. Our repairs improvement plan aims to address this, while preparing the council for the new, vitally important regulatory consumer standards. The range of improvements we are implementing is incredibly diverse, from real-time video appointments with residents on damp and mould, to new dynamic scheduling across teams which allows for more home visits in a day.

Since then, metrics for our customer satisfaction and repairs completed right first time have improved. On average, we have seen customer satisfaction increase by 7.7% over the last two years, with a similar increase of 6.9% for repairs completed right first time. We are pleased that both metrics, which are gathered by asking residents directly, are above the industry average for London.

We remain on the journey to get this right, and we will continue to put residents at the heart these changes through several measures, including our Repairs Improvement Residents' Board.

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WATSON**

The Leader told us in November that we should expect proposals on local community infrastructure levy (CIL) allocations in the spring, yet none have emerged. With millions of pounds of this funding sitting in the Council's bank account and many community projects in desperate need of support, these needless delays are negatively impacting our residents and communities. When can we expect to see the local CIL allocation proposals and can the cabinet member confirm that funding will be allocated to projects in the wards it was created, in line with what local community groups and charities are asking?

**RESPONSE**

The use of the Local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is an important tool to ensure that the new developments are accompanied by improvements for the local community. I am pleased to confirm that a report starting consultation on the allocation of Local CIL will be presented to Cabinet in September. Funding for local community infrastructure projects will be allocated from the autumn through to the winter, allowing ward councillors to ensure that ideas from local community groups and charities across the borough are considered in the proposals that are brought forward.

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD**

Can the Leader give an update on Southwark 2030 and what a new government means for the borough's ambitions?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark 2030 has been fully shaped by our residents who told us the place they want Southwark to be by 2030. I am pleased that the Southwark 2030 strategy will be considered at Cabinet in September, bringing us one step closer to making our residents' vision for Southwark a reality. The council is updating the Council Delivery Plan to align with the strategy's ambitions and will introduce a partnerships outcomes framework and action plan to monitor progress.

Our new Labour government's missions strongly reflect the six priorities set out in the Southwark 2030 strategy. Labour's priorities around housing, breaking down barriers of opportunity and tackling violent crime strongly supports our commitments to support families and create a safer Southwark. The council will greatly benefit with this new era and we will continue to work closely with the new government, our partners, and the wider public sector to ensure that we can achieve our ambitions together.

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN**

In June, the council referred itself to the Regulator of Social Housing due to its failure to conduct electrical safety tests. Once again, council tenants have been seriously let down. With the Grenfell Tower disaster having been started by an electrical fire, residents are understandably very anxious about what this means for them and their families. How long has the council known it has not been following best practice in conducting electrical safety tests and why was the referral not made sooner?

**RESPONSE**

Keeping residents safe in their homes will always be our top priority. In 2023, we started a programme of testing council homes in order of those identified as the highest risk and that is ongoing. Prior to that, the council completed tests

as part of routine and planned activities such as voids, major works and repairs. An audit in relation to all compliancy matters was commissioned in March of this year, which reinforced our known position relating to the test status. As soon as we received and reviewed the report in June, we immediately elected to self-refer our position to the Regulator.

**5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR RENATA HAMVAS**

With tightening budgets due to central government cuts to councils, we need to find new, innovative ways of funding our drive toward Net Zero. One such initiative is the Southwark Green Investment Fund. Could the Leader provide an update on the first round of fundraising and the next steps for the fund?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Green Investment Fund provides an unprecedented opportunity for our community to contribute to a sustainable future through a low-risk, fixed return investment in local green projects. The council held our first round of investment in February of this year, where we reached our initial target of raising £1m in just 8 weeks. This was five weeks ahead of schedule, thanks to the record-breaking number of local residents who invested £305,930 – almost a third of the total raised. The funds raised will now be allocated to a range of green initiatives, including the installation of cycle hangars, implementation of new LED street lighting, and environmental upgrades at local schools and leisure centres. The council is currently planning the next round of investment, and dates will be announced in the summer.

**6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR EMILY TESTER**

At the budget, the council unanimously endorsed the creation of a Pride Fund, which was a very welcome step forward in supporting our thriving LGBTQ+ communities in Southwark. But the process has been met by local LGBTQ+ organisations with disappointment and frustration. The funds were too small and confirmed far too late to allow proper planning – just 24 hours before Pride month began, and didn't even support the official Pride in Southwark event. Will the Cabinet Member commit to taking these lessons on board next year to ensure that the fund genuinely matches its purpose?

**RESPONSE**

We are delighted to have supported Southwark Pride this summer. The LGBTQ+ community give so much to the borough, it was important to have the opportunity to thank them and celebrate their contribution. Once the programme was established, we received 35 applications and were able to support 19 of them. We endeavoured to let both successful and unsuccessful applicants know the outcome of their bids as early as possible. As part of our commitment to celebrating Pride and amplifying Southwark's LGBTQ+ community year-round, the fund is also supporting activity to help deliver a 'Summer of Pride' with activities running up until 31 August 2024. To support

Pride 2025, we will be launching the Pride Fund early next year to continue this good work.

**7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR SAM DALTON**

Can the Leader confirm that the new zebra crossing on Long Lane and part-closure of Wild's Rents, called for by local residents and councillors in London Bridge and West Bermondsey and Chaucer wards to improve pedestrian safety and reduce traffic, will go ahead later this year?

**RESPONSE**

I am delighted that funding has been secure to install a new zebra crossing for Long Lane. The council is firmly committed to safer and quieter streets with less traffic and fewer accidents, as set out in Our Streets for People strategy. The final stage to finalise plans for the crossing will take place later this month through a statutory consultation. I would strongly encourage local residents in London Bridge, West Bermondsey and Chaucer wards to respond to the consultation and share what a positive difference it would make to your community. We prioritise the needs of pedestrians and hope to deliver the new crossing in autumn 2024.

**8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR NICK JOHNSON**

The affordable housing monitor tracking actual affordable houses versus S.106 obligations has not been updated since 2022, with the last audit supposedly occurring last March. As of 2022, at least 14 developments did not meet the agreed S.106 provision of either affordable, socially rented, or intermediate units. Can the cabinet member provide an update on the missing information and when we can expect to see the latest audit, and what enforcement action has been taken against those that have not met their S.106 obligations?

**RESPONSE**

The annual affordable housing audit has been carried out from 2021 to 2024. The council's website has been updated with the latest available audit, which was carried out in March 2023 for the financial year 2022/23. This can be viewed here:

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/monitoring/monitoring-affordable-housing-delivery>

The developers contacted in the 2022/23 audit all met their relevant legal obligations and required provision of affordable housing. As such, no enforcement action was required as a result of the 2022/23 audit. The audit for the financial year 2023/24 is underway, with results expected to be published by the end of summer. Of the 14 developments that did not meet their legal obligations or their required provision for affordable housing in 2022, 10 cases have been closed. The 10 cases were all investigated by the planning enforcement team and were either found to have not breached the legal



agreements or any breaches were resolved. The four remaining cases are under investigation, with legal advice being sought where appropriate. The council will take robust action as needed.

**9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ESME DOBSON**

The council recently completed 12 brand new council homes on Nunhead Lane, as part of continued delivery in the borough. Can the Leader outline how the council plans to continue to build good council homes for our residents?

**RESPONSE**

The 12 new council homes on Nunhead Lane are just one example of the over 3,000 council homes completed or under construction in Southwark. Our report to Monday's Cabinet sets out plans to take forward our next phase to delivering homes over the next four years, continuing to deliver the most ambitious council house building programme in the country. We look forward to continuing our work with the Mayor of London alongside working with the new Labour government to support their ambition to build 1.5m new homes.

**10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR IRINA VON WIESE**

Last year we raised the issue of the council imposing tennis coaching from the National Tennis Association on all parks in Southwark, overriding long standing local tennis coaches in the process. Many coaches were subsequently folded into the new arrangement under this provider, but we have now learned that at least one long standing coach is now barred from coaching tennis in any park in Southwark, despite support from parents and guardians. Does the council stand by its statement from last year that this has been "fair and transparent"?

**RESPONSE**

In December 2022, the council started a procurement process to identify a single tennis coach/coaching organisation to work at each park in Southwark. The National Tennis Association (NTA) was awarded contracts for four park sites alongside another coaching organisation which was awarded contracts for two park sites. Both organisations demonstrated a strong programme with plans to expand coaching to different age groups and schools across the community, high-quality governance and coach support, and an appropriate court hire offer. The procurement exercise followed all processes, and so was fair and transparent.

All coaches legitimately working at each park site were then offered a position to deliver community programmes by the NTA. All coaches working for the NTA are required to deliver coaching to the required Lawn Tennis Association standards in addition to customer expectations.

The council tennis terms restrict coaching at each park site to one coaching provider to prevent overuse of the courts by coaches, and to prioritise wider

community benefit. Allowing one provider an agreed amount of time with a varied development programme means the courts can be enjoyed by more people in a coherent and transparent way.

**11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR KATH WHITTAM**

Could the Leader update us on the council's progress in reaching 100,000 trees in the borough?

**RESPONSE**

The council has made fantastic progress with its tree-planting programme. Since 2020 the council has planted over 30,000 trees working in partnership with local people and schools to identify the best locations for these trees. In the last year we have developed partnerships with 18 schools alongside working with local people to create more nature sites, woodlands and urban planting.

**12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE**

With support from both parties, the Green Finance initiative launched to great success, with the target £1 million raised well before the initial deadline. With clear appetite for this sort of investment, will the council consider expanding its ambitions to raise even more vital funds to tackle the climate emergency beyond the initial £6 million target?

**RESPONSE**

The Southwark Green Investment was a clear Labour manifesto commitment, and we are delighted that we have been able to deliver this for the borough, with remarkable levels of support from local businesses and residents. Our current programme is the biggest of its kind for any borough in the country. In a scheme where the minimum investment is only £5, the people of this borough invested more than £300,000 in our shared, greener future and we raised £1m overall. The council will continue to look at how to build on this successful initiative and set a target that is both ambitious and achievable.

**13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR REGGIE POPOOLA**

Last week we celebrated an amazing 20 years of Southwark Works. Could the Leader update us on how the occasion was marked and on Southwark's plans for the future?

**RESPONSE**

In 2024, Southwark Works celebrated its twentieth year supporting Southwark residents at risk of long-term unemployment into good quality jobs with local employers. Southwark Works has supported thousands of local residents into

work and is recognised as a model of best practice for employment support. We marked that anniversary on 11 July 2024 at Southwark College where I had the opportunity to thank our staff, our partners and clients for making Southwark Works such a success. This programme and those involved represent the very best of the borough – resilient, dedicated and committed to ensuring people have every opportunity to reach their potential. Southwark Works will continue to provide wrap around support for clients furthest from the labour market, including those with physical and mental health conditions, learning disabilities, caring responsibilities, and vulnerable young people.

**14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR RACHEL BENTLEY**

At the November council assembly, the leader committed to looking into the issues of security doors at Bradley House. Despite repeated requests there are still issues with the doors. Did he look into it and do nothing, or did he not look into it at all?

**RESPONSE**

Following my enquiries, a fully technical survey confirmed that the only available resolution was to replace the access system and issue new fob keys to the residents. In April 2024, the project was approved and the works completed in early June 2024. Letters were sent out to residents at the beginning of June to inform them of this and the process of issuing the new entry fobs is well under way. The new system was switched on with doors locking again from 12 July 2024.

**15. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND REFUGEES FROM COUNCILLOR MARGY NEWENS**

What update can the cabinet member give on Southwark's ambitions to become a Borough of Sanctuary?

**RESPONSE FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

I am very pleased to announce that Southwark Council has been awarded the status of Borough of Sanctuary by the City of Sanctuary movement. We join nine other local authorities in London that have this status and are one of only 18 in the country. The award is recognition that Southwark Council plays an active role in creating a welcoming environment for refugees, migrants and vulnerable asylum seekers seeking sanctuary in our communities and challenging the hostile environment created by the previous government.

**16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, DEMOCRACY AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JOSEPH VAMBE**

Last month we celebrated Pride Month. Could the Cabinet Member for Equalities, Democracy and Finance update us on what events took place in Southwark and how we are celebrating our LGBTQ+ Community?

## RESPONSE

Our new annual Pride fund supported a variety of local events. One example is the Carnaval del Pueblo to host Latin American Pride Fest, the UK's first pride festival celebrating the queer Latinx community. We also helped Sanura Dance teach attendees the basics of Salsa and Bachata in a welcoming, LGBTQ+ friendly environment and the Africa Centre deliver Mixology and Zouk dance classes.

Upcoming Summer of Pride events include Pride in a Flash at Walworth Library where we will see readings of Flash Fiction, and Draper Together will focus on their LGBT Storytelling and Education Initiative.

The full list of successful applicants is below and, when combined with events the council itself hosted via the Library service, I hope that we have demonstrated our deep support of the LGBTQ+ community here in Southwark.

### Successful Bids:

- Copleston Pride
- Queeritvity
- Summer Pride Series
- Peckham Queer Art Boot Fair
- LatAm Pride Fest
- "Not a Point, a Spectrum"
- Rhapsody in Southwark
- Queer Diary Zine-making Southwark
- LGBTQ+ creative writing workshop "WRITING PROUD"
- Pride Pulse: Building Momentum, Connecting Communities
- Pride recognition slot at The Bermondsey Square Jazz Day
- Mixology and Zouk dance classes
- RYE-ting with Pride
- LGBT Storytelling and Education Initiative
- Pride Month at Pecan
- Queer Ecologies Community Festival
- Pride in Southwark
- QUEER Salsa & Bachata Social | Pride Party
- Striking with Pride - Behind the scenes of a queer feature documentary

## 17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR CASSANDRA BROWN

Recently residents have reported issues with antisocial behaviour on the Longfield Estate. How is the cabinet member working with residents and the police to tackle this issue?

## **RESPONSE**

The South Bermondsey Safer Neighbourhood police team are fully engaged and working with Southwark Antisocial Behaviour Unit (SASBU). Our community wardens conducted patrols on the Longfield estate from October 2023 through to February 2024 and carried out 48 patrols around Craigie House for reports of anti-social behaviour. SASBU have also worked with the police on conducting a closure order earlier this year on the neighbouring estate which has seen a dramatic improvement in the overall area. SASBU will undertake letter drops on the estate to encourage reporting and attend ward panels as appropriate, to address the residents' concerns. If there is an increase in reported antisocial behaviour, SASBU will work with partners to address this.

### **18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS AND BUSINESS FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HOOD**

The shops at Crossthwaite Avenue are facing extraordinary rent hikes. It is shocking that the council is not protecting exactly the type of small local businesses that deserve to thrive. The lack of engagement from senior officials and councillors responsible in a transparent discussion with the shopkeepers has led to outrage in the local community, with over 25,000 signatures to the petition to date. The issue has clearly exposed problems with the council's attitude towards small business and the consequences of its outsourced operations. Will the council work to resolve the situation by ensuring that rent increases are index linked to inflation only, and reviewing the currently outsourced arrangement for managing commercial lettings to ensure that policies for supporting local businesses are embedded into practice?

## **RESPONSE**

The shops, businesses and business owners on Crossthwaite Avenue are an integral part of their community and we are committed to working with them to find a solution to the current situation. There are currently two business tenants whose leases came up for renewal and haven't seen any rent increases for some years now, stretching back to before the pandemic.

As elsewhere in the borough, a rent review is due when existing leases expire. Any rent review carried out seeks to ensure we are charging appropriate, market-based rents in line with neighbouring business tenants. We have a responsibility to use council assets appropriately and ensure we are obtaining value for money for residents in Southwark.

The method of agreeing rent at the beginning of a lease is typically based on the value of the property on the open market. Once agreement is reached the lease may contain mechanisms to review that rent in the future. Commonly this is either periodical rent reviews to the current market rent at time of renewal or indexation to a suitable index such as CPI. At times of high inflation, pinning rent rises to inflation can leave tenants paying far higher rates than they would do so on the open market. Senior officers will continue to work with the tenants on Crossthwaite Avenue to find a solution and I am confident that they will do so in the coming months.

**19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR NEW HOMES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH MCCALLUM**

Will the council provide an update on the progress of all council 'infill' developments throughout the borough?

For each development on an existing estate, can the council provide the following information:

- The current stage of construction (i.e. planning submitted/granted, contractors appointed, hoardings erected, demolition/ground works completed, building frame started, external works completed, or properties occupied, etc)
- The projected completion date and number of new homes provided (split by affordable and not affordable) upon completion.

**RESPONSE**

The council has a strong commitment to building the next generation of council homes for those most in need in our borough. Part of this strategy includes making best use of council land and working with residents to find sites that can provide added value for everyone. We are proud to have to over 3,000 homes either completed or on site over the past year.

We have published an update on the progress on all council 'infill' developments, which can be found under item 11 in the agenda papers for Cabinet on Monday 22 July 2024.

[Agenda for Cabinet on Monday 22 July 2024, 11.00 am - Southwark Council](#)

**20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON**

Could the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing update on any progress made by the maternity commission?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Maternity Commission seeks to understand and address the health inequalities in maternity care in the borough, especially amongst Black and Brown women and people who give birth. Since its launch in January, it has engaged with and heard from over 600 resident frontline professionals through a series of public meetings in the community, targeted surveys and commissioned insights research. There remains two further information-gathering meetings with fathers and maternity care innovators later in July. The Commission report will be launched at the final meeting at the end of September, after which the recommendations will be brought to the Health and Wellbeing Board to support action planning and implementation.

**21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, PARKS AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM COUNCILLOR MAGGIE BROWNING**

Can the cabinet member tell me what steps are being taken to ensure Peckham Rye Park is being protected during GALA festival and after the event is finished?

**RESPONSE**

We look forward to welcoming GALA festival to Peckham Rye Park in 2025. We have learned lessons from hosting the festival in previous years, which we now incorporate into the process of granting major outdoor event licenses. For example, the GALA team implemented a more robust policy around engine idling and increased the amount of trackway used for ground protection. They have also introduced measures to maintain the quality of Peckham Rye Park, such as effectively collecting discarded cable-ties. We have ensured that events operators are responsible for undertaking and paying for any repairs and reinstatement works needed as a result of events in our parks. In previous years, this has included re-tarmacking damaged roadways, re-turfing damaged grass and fixing signs. We will be speaking with residents, community groups and the Friends of Peckham Rye Park over the coming weeks through our Safety Advisory Group and community debrief sessions in order to ensure they are fully engaged with keeping the park in its best possible state for all residents to enjoy.

**22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR NEW HOMES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the proposed Bakerloo Line upgrade and expansion, following public events at The UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF) in May?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Council, in collaboration with Central London Forward and Lewisham Council, organised an engaging panel at UKREiiF, with more than 100 industry experts in attendance. It highlighted the case for the Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Extension (BLUE). Our joint 'Moving London Forward' report revealed this project will unlock £1.5bn in national economic growth, enabling an additional 107,00 homes across the length of the line and create job growth through investment in infrastructure. The first new station on the line is in construction at Elephant and Castle with funding from Southwark Council, TfL and Delancy the developer. In addition, a detailed design study for the new stations along the line is now underway, part funded by Southwark Council and Lewisham Council. The council is also committed to contributing 50% of its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to funding the development of the BLUE.

**23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN AIR, STREETS AND WASTE FROM COUNCILLOR JANE SALMON**

The problems we are seeing on Lower Road are partly due to the coincidence with other projects needing to restrict traffic flow, including Thames Water maintenance and improvement works. On Lower Road and across the borough there is an increasing sense that water maintenance works are poorly planned and take far too long. Whilst the council does have limited powers to penalise over-running works, what more can the council do to ensure that disruption from these projects are minimised before spades hit the ground?

**RESPONSE**

The council can receive up to 25,000 applications from utility providers for activities on the highway each year. The council cannot withhold permissions for these works but does seek to co-ordinate these works with other known projects. The council also collaborates with the respective organisations to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum for residents and businesses. 99% of the works were completed on time in the last financial year, but the council applies penalties when works do overrun.

**24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL**

Public consumption of illegal drugs is becoming an increasing issue in St George's and across the borough, representing a problem both for residents having to deal with needles, other drug paraphernalia and increasing anti-social behaviour, but also of course for those trapped in addiction. The systems currently in place are clearly not sufficient to deal with this problem. What more will the council do to ensure that the Southwark anti-social behaviour unit (SASBU) are able to properly target their resources on known hotspots, and help those dealing with addiction get the help they need?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark's Anti Social Behaviour Unit (SASBU) officers work with victims and witnesses who have reported the behaviours, as well working in partnership with the St George's Ward Policing Team, Community Wardens and commissioned services, including Change, Grow, Live and St Mungo's, to collectively tackle the problem. This year SASBU have taken legal action in relation to drug activities which includes injunctive relief against individuals and closure orders. SASBU has also supported St George's Local Policing Team in obtaining closure orders on non-council managed properties. In 2024-25, SASBU has received additional funding for an Advanced Practitioner Dual Diagnosis Social Worker and an additional SASBU officer dedicated to supporting people to access treatment for drug and alcohol misuse. Both officers are in post.



**25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR BARRIE HARGROVE**

Can the cabinet member explain the way by which leaseholder charges are calculated on district heating systems?

**RESPONSE**

Leaseholder district heating charges are based on the cost of running the boiler house and plant rooms serving the connected properties and are made up of a number of different elements. As explained in the service charge booklet these are:

- The price and use of gas
- The price and use of electricity to power the boiler and plant rooms
- The cost of making sure that equipment is serviced regularly
- The cost of reactive repairs
- Overheads and management costs

The above costs are added together to give an overall cost of heating an estate. This total is then apportioned between each property receiving heating or hot water from that boiler house, taking into account property size and heating service type.

**26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS AND BUSINESS FROM COUNCILLOR YUCEF HASSAINE**

Could the Lead Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs and Business update me on Southwark's Climate Action Day, which took place last month?

**RESPONSE**

The council held its annual Climate Day, hosted at The Hub in London Southbank University, on Saturday 22 June. A range of workshops, stalls and pop-up services were available for the nearly 400 attendees, focusing on supporting residents in making positive changes towards a more sustainable, climate friendly lifestyle. The workshops on offer focused on topics such as conservation and sustainable food. Loanhood ran a clothes swap, the Repair Café fixed broken household items and bike mechanics offered repairs services to help residents get back on their bikes this summer. Home energy advice was also available to support residents reduce their energy use and cut down on bills. We look forward to building on this event's success and bringing more events that help our community contribute to making Southwark a net-zero borough.