

Council Assembly

Wednesday 12 November 2025

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Tabled Items

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1.3.	Notification of any items of business which the mayor deems urgent Programme motion	1 - 3
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SOUTHWARK COUNCIL

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY MEETING)

WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2025

PROGRAMME MOTION

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

Time	Business
19:00 – 19:05	1. Preliminary business and announcements
19:05 – 19:15	2.2 Public questions One public question
19:15 – 19.25 (5 minutes' speech and a question to cabinet member)	4 Deputations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judith Kerr Primary School
19:25 – 20:25 (20 minutes – 5 minutes' speech) (7 minutes) (5 minutes) (25 minutes) (3 minutes)	Themed debate 3.1 Community Evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens Advice Southwark Policy Institute, King's College London TUC London East & South East 3.2 Motion on the Theme <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor John Batteson Councillor Tester, opposition spokesperson Themed debate open to all other councillors Cabinet member's right of reply to the debate
20:25 – 20:35 (5 minutes' speech and a question to cabinet member)	4. Deputations Living Bankside
20:35 – 20:40	Recess
20:40 – 21:15 (5 minutes) (15 minutes) (15 minutes)	5.1 Members' Question Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late question Members' questions to the leader Members' questions to the cabinet
21:15 – 22:00	5.2 Motions
	Motion 1 – Demanding Real Fairer Funding for Southwark
	Motion 2 – Action to divest the Southwark Pension Fund from conflict and genocide
	Motion 3 – Southwark Council will not water down affordable housing requirements
	Motion 4 – Cleaner and Safer Streets in Southwark
	Motion 5 – Make Peckham Rye Station safe and accessible
	Motion 6 – Our water our way
22:00*	6. Reports

Time	Business
	6.1 – Proportionality and Allocation of Seats on Committees Constitutional Changes: Appointment of Chairs and Vice-chairs; Motions
	6.2 – Treasury Management – Mid-year Update 2025-26
	6.3 – Appointment of Honorary Recorder of Southwark
	6.4 – Re-appointment of independent person

* 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:

- Citizens Advice Southwark
- Policy Institute, King's College London
- TUC London East & South East

Format

A five minute presentation from the groups.

3.1 Motion on the theme

Themed debate

To run as listed in the timings above.

To have a single debate.

Item 4 Deputation requests:

To receive submissions from the groups listed in the deputation requests report in supplemental agenda no. 1:

- Judith Kerr Primary School
- Living Bankside

(Five minutes to speak, question to relevant cabinet member)

To hear the deputation submission from Judith Kerr Primary School before the themed debate.

Item 5.2 General motions:

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

Motion 2 – Action to divest the Southwark Pension Fund from conflict and genocide

To update the text of paragraph 2 a. of the motion to read:

- a. The tentative ceasefire in Gaza which - at the time of writing - is resulting in the exchange of prisoners and hostages, both living and dead, between Israel and Palestine.

Motion 3 – Southwark Council will not water down affordable housing requirements

To update the text of paragraph 3 b. of the motion to read:

- b. Not to water down affordable and social housing requirements: meaning, no reduction in the minimum affordable housing requirement of 35%, nor any reduction in the minimum social rent requirement of 25%.

Item 6.1 Proportionality and Allocation of Seats on Committees

Constitutional Changes: Appointment of Chairs and Vice-chairs; Motions

To note the updated recommendations for item 6.1 in the addendum report in supplemental agenda no. 1 and to use the changed wording of recommendations 1 and 2.

Agenda Item 2.2

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL

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PUBLIC QUESTION WITH RESPONSE

1. QUESTION FROM ANGIE SOMERSIDE TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES

Why are the council failing in their duty to make important structural repairs and maintain Harold Moody House, a building of significant cultural interest? Not only is this a massive health and safety risk to residents, it is also a dereliction of duty by the council as freeholders.

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU, CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES

The council is aware of the issues at Harold Moody House and are committed to delivering the works as swiftly as possible. Statutory leasehold consultation procedures has meant that we are required to undergo a mandatory 30-day observation period, but we are actively engaging with the leaseholders to explore whether they are willing to waive these observation periods, which could allow us to bring the start date forward. Once we are given the go ahead for the works, a programme will be shared with residents.

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL
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LATE QUESTION WITH RESPONSE

1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Southwark Council recently hit national headlines for all the wrong reasons. The Chancellor of the Exchequer failed to comply with the landlord licensing scheme for over a year, despite being made aware that she needed to comply by two separate agencies.

This was a scheme brought in by her own party, and one she advocated for in her own constituency. She has accepted full responsibility for the error. The Prime Minister has declined to hold her to account - will this council step up and be holding her to the standards that residents expect, and demonstrate that no-one is above the rules?

RESPONSE

The purpose of our housing licensing scheme is to raise standards for residents who rent privately. The enforcement powers within the scheme are designed to encourage compliance and we apply our licensing scheme consistently and fairly, regardless of the landlord involved. When we become aware of an unlicensed property, we issue a warning letter advising the landlord that they have a maximum of 21 days to apply for a license – enforcement action such as fines are reserved for those who do not apply within that time or where a property is found to be in an unsafe condition or there are serious breaches of housing standards. Where landlords fail to take reasonable steps or do not respond to council contact, we do and will take enforcement action.

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL
COUNCIL ASSEMBLY
(ORDINARY MEETING)

WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2025

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS WITH RESPONSES

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR CASSANDRA BROWN

Will the Leader join me in celebrating the amazing success of Appleby Blue winning the Stirling Prize and the council's role in delivering high quality homes for older people?

RESPONSE

I am delighted that the innovation and design quality of Appleby Blue has been recognised by this prestigious award. Our role as both landowner and planning authority was key in bringing these genuinely affordable homes forward, and we are proud to have such high-quality housing for older people in our borough. We are in discussions with United St Saviours and Southwark Charities about opportunities for further developments of a similar nature.

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN

Earlier this summer the full extent of the major work scandals across three estates was revealed - and further scandals have since emerged. What hasn't been scrutinised however is the fact that in the Gateway 2 reports, a group including the deputy leader and cabinet member for council housing should have received quarterly updates on these projects - why were the clear failings and overspends not identified and tackled through these updates?

RESPONSE

We are taking decisive action to strengthen oversight and rebuild trust. Several independent reviews have been undertaken into historical major works. Their findings have been published and discussed at the Housing Scrutiny Commission, and all recommendations have been fully accepted and will be implemented. A new Major Works Board is being established to provide a formal and transparent forum for monitoring all major works projects and we are implementing a structured audit and evaluation process for key decisions. We recognise that residents and councillors must have confidence that major works are being managed responsibly. These reforms are a critical step toward restoring that confidence and ensuring that such failings are not repeated.

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR SAM FOSTER

I welcome the commitment announced in September that Southwark Council will take action to divest the Southwark Pension Fund from conflict and genocide. Could the Leader provide more detail on this commitment, including:

- A timeline for when each of the four announced actions will be taken: the divestment of pension funds, the call to the London Collective Investment Vehicle around a more robust framework for excluding investments linked to conflict and genocide, the action to steer investments in pooled funds, and the implementation of the Genocide Convention into our investment framework?
- Whether Southwark divest not only from investments linked to illegal settlements, but also from companies complicit in the genocide in Gaza and other illegal acts by Israel?
- Whether these actions are taken with the understanding that the UK's legal obligations to prevent genocide, under the Genocide Convention, apply also to local authorities as organs of the State?

RESPONSE

Whilst there is a tentative ceasefire in Gaza, I remain concerned by the humanitarian situation there and share the growing concerns over the rapidly deteriorating situation in the West Bank. Our approach and the decisions we have taken are not just designed to meet the legal minimums required. Rather, I want to make the changes necessary ensure our pension funds are invested in the most ethical way possible. Progress has been made in developing an approach to applying the commitment to building the UN Genocide Convention into our investment framework will be tabled at the next Pensions Advisory Panel in December. We adopted "pass through voting" earlier in the year specifically in relation to climate change. We are now exploring its adoption in the context of human rights and investments linked to conflict zones or occupation. We are working with LCIV to ensure they assist us in supporting the implementation of our commitments and are leading a London approach. Updates on progress will come to the December and March Pensions Advisory Panel meetings.

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS

Can the Leader update me on our manifesto commitment to launch a campaign to promote workers' rights?

RESPONSE

Guaranteeing the rights of workers across Southwark is a core mission of this council. We're working with partners across London to promote good employers, as highlighted in this week's London Living Wage celebrations.

Through our *Know Your Worth, Know Your Rights* campaign and support for Labour's Employment Rights Bill, we're raising awareness and driving change. Our dedicated Living Wage Unit is on track to double the number of Living Wage employers by the end of this term, already helping over 7,000 people out of poverty pay. Through our new Employment Rights Hub, and working alongside trade unions, we're making sure every Southwark resident is treated fairly at work.

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR RACHEL BENTLEY

Southwark is one of the worst hit authorities by Labour government's farcical council-funding shake-up. A former Southwark deputy leader is signing off these cuts in government, another former Southwark councillor sits in the Cabinet Office, and a Southwark Labour MP sits in the Department for Local Government. Even with this level of influence over the government, Labour is not delivering for Southwark. What is the leader doing to utilise these connections to ensure that these devastating planned cuts do not go ahead?

RESPONSE

Southwark residents deserve fair funding for the services they rely on every day. We have been actively engaging with ministers and national government officials to ensure the needed reform of local government funding accurately addresses the pressures acutely felt by inner London boroughs like Southwark. This includes coordinated efforts with London Councils, Central London Forward and our neighbouring borough Lambeth. We have submitted a formal response to the consultation, lobbied parliament with neighbouring Lambeth, held briefings with MPs and organised meetings to represent the pressures faced by our residents. We will never shy away from our duty to fight for the residents of our borough.

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS

What is the council doing this year to ensure all pensioners eligible for pension credit are able to claim it this winter?

RESPONSE

Southwark Council helps those residents who need our support to maximise their income. A key part of that is ensuring that eligible pensioners sign up for Pension Credit and we have seen significant success in that programme. Almost eight hundred new claims for Pension Credit last winter put millions of pounds into the pockets of some of our poorest and most vulnerable households. The Council remains firmly committed to that work and will work with residents where we can to encourage sign up for Pension Credits.

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

Whilst the ceasefire agreement in place in Gaza is a positive step forward, it's clear that there is still much more work to be done to ensure that aid is allowed into the region, illegal occupations in the West Bank are stopped, that all hostages, including the remains of any deceased, are returned, and to ensure there is a lasting peace. That requires maximum pressure from the international community and organisations that are able to apply financial pressure. Will the leader update us on progress made to date on the divestment commitments announced in September?

RESPONSE

Please see answer to Question 3.

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR JASON OCHERE

Can the Leader update me on our plans to build the next phase of council homes in our borough?

RESPONSE

London is facing one of the most challenging housebuilding environments in recent history, and so I am delighted to announce that Southwark Council is still finding a way to build new council homes. Early phases across two new lots of development will see more than 500 affordable homes, including at least 250 council homes for our residents. We will be continually engaging with the developers to explore opportunities to further enhance the levels of council housing on these sites.

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL

Whilst it's good to see the council starting to take action to tackle crime in Peckham and Walworth, residents in St George's ward will be disappointed that there is no area plan for Blackfriars Road, which is experiencing acute levels of phone snatching, theft, and anti-social behaviour. Will the leader consider extending the boundaries of the North Walworth area action plan to incorporate Blackfriars Road, or create a bespoke plan for this area of Southwark?

RESPONSE

We remain committed to ensuring the safety of all Southwark residents. The current North Walworth Area Action Plan's boundaries and priorities were determined through detailed, data-driven analysis of reported crime. The rise in phone snatching, theft, and anti-social behaviour in this area has been noted and responding to those challenges is a key priority for the council, in

cooperation with the Metropolitan Police and other partners. Officers within the Community Safety Partnership are reviewing the latest data to determine whether the Blackfriars Road area should be incorporated into future iterations of the North Walworth plan or whether a bespoke plan for the SE1 corridor would deliver a more effective response. In the meantime, several measures are already in place to address the concerns raised. These include: Regular patrols by Police Officers and Council Wardens, re-tasking resources based on real time developments, Targeted operations with both high-visibility and plain-clothes policing, Awareness raising to make residents aware that they need to keep their possessions safe and Deployment of Live Facial Recognition (LFR) units in hotspot areas as part of a broader deterrence strategy

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR SABINA EMMANUEL

Can the Leader update me on our Manifesto commitment to double the number of living wage employers in our borough?

RESPONSE

This week is London Living Wage Week and we are going to be celebrating Southwark Council's award winning Living Wage work, working with organisations such as Imperial War Museum, Borough Market and Blue Elephant Theatre. And there is a lot to be proud of. Since April 2022, the number of accredited Living Wage Employers in Southwark has increased from 248 to 450 — an 81% rise. 7,000 Southwark workers received a pay increase onto the London Living Wage as a result, reducing in-work poverty and strengthen our local economy. Southwark Council won 'Industry Champion' and James Reed, Senior Programme Officer, won 'Advocate of the Year' at the Living Wage Champion Awards 2025.

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR NICK JOHNSON

Opposition to the Labour government's digital ID scheme was the subject of a Parliamentary Petition receiving over 1 million signatures. One of the key reasons for opposing it concerns accessibility for those who are digitally excluded - can the leader confirm whether she supports the scheme, and what steps will be taken locally to ensure that those with digital access issues are not further excluded from society?

RESPONSE

The Digital ID scheme proposed by government is designed to make it easier for people to access vital public services, prove their identities to employers and landlords and, amongst other things, make it easier for parents and carers to apply for childcare. I will await the detail of the scheme and its implementation before making a final judgement, especially around concerns around those that do not have a smart phone or home internet access. In the meantime the council continues to offer support for our residents with their digital inclusion needs via the Good Things Digital Inclusion Network, making

routers available for loan to those residents with limited or no access to the internet, our digital learning hubs, drop in sessions and home visits for those who are digitally excluded. This year alone we have supported 812 residents with their digital skills with the support of our volunteer Digital Champions. Residents can call our dedicated helpline on 07783776066 and contact us, when they can, via email at Digital.Inclusion@southwark.gov.uk for support with their digital inclusion needs.

12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES

Can the Leader update me on Labour's local commitment to keep our streets, estates and town centres safe at night?

RESPONSE

Safety is a key priority for our residents and one we share. Additional funding has been ringfenced to provide a supplementary uniformed patrol service to extend our current on-street patrol presence later into the night and at weekends, when ASB and crime is at its peak. The service focuses on specific locations and times in response to ASB & Crime data, provides between 8-10 officers, working between 6.00pm and 2.00am 7 days a week, which equates to 450 hours a month of visible patrolling. We have also invested £3m to upgrade our public space town centre CCTV cameras, significantly improving nighttime vision and our ability to capture and report any behaviours that negatively affect people's safety. Central to nighttime safety we have undertaken Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Action Days, which have taken place in key areas identified through community feedback and safety surveys, including London Bridge, Peckham, Canada Water, and Burgess Park.

13. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ELLIE CUMBO

Can the Leader update us on Labour's action to tackle graffiti in hotspots like Camberwell Church Street?

RESPONSE

Graffiti can be a blight on our town centres. We are tackling this through a new approach which was very successfully rolled out at Camberwell Church St. It involves inviting businesses to take up our free removal service, using targeted 'Blitzes' to rapidly remove large amounts of graffiti, and 'designing out' graffiti using specialised paints & murals. After the pilot's we are deploying this approach at other hotspots including Elephant & Castle, Peckham, and the Old Kent Road.

14. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN AIR, STREETS, AND WASTE FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE

Can the Cabinet Member update me on the launch of the Bakerloop Bus?

RESPONSE

The all-electric Bakerloop express bus is a fantastic addition to the borough's transport network. It was a pleasure to attend the launch event in September with the Mayor of London and feel the excitement around this service. Not only does it significantly expand transport options for our residents, but it also serves as a reminder that South London wants to see the tube extended, and I believe will prove the need and demand for the Bakerloo line extension in the months and years to come.

15. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR BETHAN ROBERTS

How are we making sure that we support our residents and tenants on our estates?

RESPONSE

Southwark Council is committed to ensuring that every resident living in our council homes and estates feel safe, supported, and listened to. To achieve this, we are investing £250m to upgrade safety measures, alongside dedicated funding to tackle thorny damp and mould issues. We are also working more directly with residents on their priorities. We have delivered over 55 repairs actions days, where residents get the chance to have things fixed on the spot, get advice, or ask questions. We are expanding this approach with new housing surgeries that provide residents with valuable in person contact with officers close to their home.

16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, DEMOCRACY AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR SUZANNE ABACHOR

How did Southwark Council mark Black History Month 2025?

RESPONSE

During Black History Month, Southwark Council have awarded £32,000 in grants to 18 organisations across the borough to host events that celebrate the talent, achievements and contributions of Southwark's Black communities, provide opportunities for learning and to promote social cohesion by sharing histories and culture. One example of these community programmes is the **Celebrating Black Wisdom** Event at Southwark Pensioners Centre, which is a day of activities that connect older and younger people in our borough. Right here in our Tooley St office, we have had a month-long exhibition showcasing 500 years of black history in Southwark and hosted a panel event focussed on black activism.

17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN AIR, STREETS, AND WASTE FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HOOD

A recent audit revealed that despite highways contractors repeatedly missing key performance indicators (KPIs), the council was not putting proper plans in place to rectify this. How much public money has been spent on these contractors who were not meeting their KPIs?

RESPONSE

We take our contract monitoring responsibilities very seriously, especially in highways. The October report you are referring to did, in an early draft show various key performance indicators as not being met. However, this was caused by a specific temporary problem with the contractors technology which didn't allow them to mark works as completed when they had been. Using back up photos from the inspector this report was rectified and shared with the auditors showing works, had been completed on time. We continue to scrutinise the performance of our highways contractor through regular meetings in which key performance indicators are discussed, and failure to hit these targets does result in financial penalties for the contractor.

18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN AIR, STREETS, AND WASTE FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on how Southwark Council is ensuring that local residents and organisations are meaningfully engaged in the Lambeth-led Kennington Triangle plans?

RESPONSE

Lambeth will be publishing a design report and project update this month. This will include the alternatives & mitigations raised in the consultation. Lambeth, along with Southwark will consider these mitigations, especially around Brook Drive and surrounding streets, we anticipate this will take a few months. We are also arranging a separate meeting to discuss the alternate proposal from West Square residents.

19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, PARKS AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM COUNCILLOR JOSPEH VAMBE

What work is being undertaken by the council following new national funding from Labour for youth transformation?

RESPONSE

The Council has received £500,000 from Central Government for the youth service transformation programme - one of only two London Boroughs.

Between now and August we will draw up a transformation plan to improve our youth services. We will do this by centring the voices of young people, better communicating where activities are available, designing a new system of funding for youth activities, and setting out clear standards. In Southwark this will build on the excellent work already done by our youth service and inform a national programme of rebuilding youth services devastated by austerity.

20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID PARTON

Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on how we are working with communities to deliver their priorities via our new Neighbourhoods?

RESPONSE

Southwark is a diverse borough and each of our neighbourhoods have their own character, strengths and challenges. We've recognised 10 distinct neighbourhoods in the Borough, each has a neighbourhood champion, who will bring people together and make sure local voices are heard.

To start this new approach, we are working with local people to create a community plan for each neighbourhood. Plans will continue to evolve as each neighbourhood does and we have received 1,513 responses to a series of Neighbourhood Surveys we ran.

At the start of next year we will be announcing how we will be spending a share of a £3.3 million Neighbourhood Grants programme. Residents, community groups and local organisations could apply for funding through a new single application form and the programme closed to applications at the end of October, after receiving 886 applications.

21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND REFUGEES FROM COUNCILLOR CHARLIE SMITH

What progress has been made regarding the delivery of the planned expansion of Charter East School?

RESPONSE

The final phase of the construction of Charter School East Dulwich on the former Dulwich Hospital site completed earlier this year. The buildings will now provide larger teaching spaces, a dedicated sixth form study hall, main assembly hall, library, bespoke music classrooms and a large outdoor space for students. Southwark Council has also contributed £6.55m towards the total development costs for an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) resource within the school site. The completed school will deliver 25 places for ASD resource in addition to 1,700 overall school places including 480 sixth form places, we continue to deliver Southwark Council's commitment to provide a 'good start in life' to our borough's children.

22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR IRINA VON WIESE

Despite committing to improve on the various concerns the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) raised last year, residents at Lant House were forced to raise their ongoing, and unresolved, concerns relating to fire safety, anti-social behaviour, and resident engagement with the regulator. The RSH has noted these concerns and said it will inform their future engagement with the council. What will the cabinet member do to ensure that the concerns of residents at Lant House are dealt with swiftly to ensure that the council is meeting its own stated aims, as well as complying with regulations?

RESPONSE

Residents at Lant House have raised extremely important issues and we are taking them incredibly seriously. We are taking meaningful action to address these issues. Earlier this year we worked with residents to launch a Tenant and Residents Association on the estate and we will be continuing to work with the TRA on specific issues raised around ASB. Fire Safety checks have been conducted and the surveyor reported a low risk, and we have issued warnings to residents regarding no smoking on the estate. We continue to work closely with the police to gather evidence required for legal enforcements, and community wardens have been assigned to daily patrols alongside night warden response to late-night incidents.

23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS AND BUSINESS FROM COUNCILLOR EMILY TESTER

In March last year we asked the previous Cabinet Member for his assessment of the state of the night time economy in Southwark - he reassured us that all was well. Since then, iconic music venue Corsica Studios has announced its closure - part of a pattern of smaller and independent venues shutting their doors across London. How many more venues like this have closed since March 2024, and what more is the council doing to support the late night economy in Southwark?

RESPONSE

Firstly, Corsica Studios clarified their future at the beginning of October. The venue will be closing for a period in order to complete a wide range of refurbishment works. Over the last couple of years, the council has worked closely with Corsica Studios and the developer to find an acoustic solution and improve their much-valued music venue, protecting their thriving cultural space in the Elephant and Castle. Corsica's owner has also credited both the council and developers for engaging in constructive dialogue about future options.

Furthermore, the council has worked closely with local communities and members to shape our licencing strategy, and the policy review currently underway will see us take into account the views of councillors, residents,

businesses and council partners to further enhance the late night economy in Southwark.

24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN AIR, STREETS, AND WASTE FROM COUNCILLOR REGINAL POPOOLA

What progress has been made on improving air quality on Southwark roads?

RESPONSE

Since we adopted our ambitious target to meet World Health Organisation guidelines on air quality by 2030, we have been making excellent progress. There have been substantial improvements on Nitrogen and Particle pollution, with both remaining below or well below national limits across 2024 even in busy areas. However, there is more to do, especially around Ozone and air quality close to construction sites. Combined with the Mayor of London's ULEZ programme, the councils continuing bold work to reduce motor traffic and increase active travel through the Streets for People programme will continue to improve air quality in the Borough.

25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING FROM YOUSSEF HASSAINA

Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the borough's integrated sexual and reproductive health service?

RESPONSE

Southwark Council has approved an extra £1m per year spend into our Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health services at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital. Due to Southwark having relatively high rates of STIs, we have recognised the need in our community and increased our investment into clinical health services. This extra funding will allow us to operate high volume activities from Burrell Street, our modern, purpose-built facility with excellent transport links. Residents will be able to access Saturday Clinics, an on-site laboratory, and dedicated spaces for safeguarding, counselling, and health promotion. We will also be offering a new dedicated women's clinic from the Harold Moody Centre to ensure those that need our services can access them. Furthermore, in October 2025 Kings College Hospital have also started a new SRH service for people aged under twenty-five, offering STI screening and treatment, contraception, and sexual health advice.

26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH MCCALLUM

The council's official auditor BDO made some startling findings regarding the decisions made around housing allocations, with discrepancies found across some documents for one particular serious case of overcrowding, and some cases with decisions being made without documentation to justify them, opening the council up for potential challenge. Given that the council did in fact

face legal challenges over its housing allocations not too long ago, what will the cabinet member do to ensure that existing and new processes are properly followed to ensure consistency and fairness across the allocations system?

RESPONSE

We are actively addressing areas that have been identified as needing improvement, and have launched an improvement programme to ensure fairness and consistency across the allocations system. This includes a new choice-based lettings system that will be implemented in January, using built in audit trails and automated bidding which will reduce manual errors. This is coming alongside new legal and procedural clarifications, new performance monitoring systems, and dedicated training for staff.

27. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS AND BUSINESS FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WATSON

Leaks from above into council-owned commercial properties continue to cause issues, with several local businesses reporting having to close down or move due to this. Given that 60% of the council's commercial property portfolio is within the housing revenue account (HRA), this will translate into less income into the HRA, which is already under acute financial pressure. Can the Cabinet Member confirm how many businesses or organisations have been forced to or chosen to vacate their premises due to leaks from above since 2022?

RESPONSE

As a commercial landlord, Southwark Council recognises our role as a key partner in the local economy and the opportunity our property portfolio provides to shape our high streets and town centres.

Since 2022, three businesses have either vacated premises or chosen not to rent a property from us due to water ingress from above. The age and nature of some properties and the fact leaks often require access to residential properties to source and resolve can present challenges. However, we understand how difficult it can be for businesses operating with any leaks, so we take all issues seriously when reported and carry out necessary repairs as quickly as possible.