

# Council Assembly

Wednesday 26 March 2014

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## Tabled Items

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Date: 26 March 2014

## COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

### (ORDINARY MEETING)

WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

##### 1. QUESTION FROM MICK BARNARD TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

If an officer stated *I have therefore decided this complaint is not within my remit to investigate* would the leader consider the complaint to have been investigated by that officer or that it needs to be investigated using another process and would he expect that process to be identified?

##### RESPONSE

When a complaint is received it is assessed as to whether it falls within the council's corporate complaint policy or another council policy, such as children's and adults' complaints. Whether an investigation is undertaken by an officer will depend on whether the case is easily identifiable as one that falls within the council's remit to investigate.

If it does not fall within the jurisdiction of any of the council's complaints policies, the complainant will be informed and the council will signpost the individual as to the appropriate process, which may sit outside of the council.

**SOUTHWARK COUNCIL****COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****(ORDINARY MEETING)****WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014****URGENT QUESTION****1. URGENT QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

What is the total budget for the Childcare Commission launched on 25 March, and how will the costs be split between Lambeth and Southwark councils?

**RESPONSE**

Dame Tessa Jowell MP, the Leader of Lambeth Council Councillor Lib Peck and myself launched the Southwark and Lambeth Childcare Commission on Tuesday.

The commission will review existing policy and practice in childcare provision, with particular reference to the experience of parents, children and childcare providers in the central London boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth. The aim of the commission will be to examine the challenges and opportunities in this area and to make recommendations for changes to policy and practice at a national, regional and local level in order to secure childcare provision that:

- is accessible and affordable to parents
- supports parents to be economically active
- is flexible enough for the 24 hour economy and working patterns of parents
- delivers quality education and development for children in the early years
- delivers an appropriate offer for older children.

The cost of the commission will be split equally between Southwark and Lambeth. We are yet to agree a budget, but this will depend upon factors such as the scope of the commission, secretariat required and whether research support is provided within the Councils or through an outside agency such as a think tank. We are currently discussing these with Dame Tessa as the chair of the commission.

Officers are currently looking at the process of joint decision making between Southwark and Lambeth when we will agree issues such as budget and the full scope of the commission.

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**  
**(ORDINARY)**  
**WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014**  
**MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ALTHEA SMITH**

By gender, ethnicity and pay-grade, will the leader of Southwark Council detail how many council posts and/or jobs have been added or lost since 2003 and of those posts and jobs how many individuals have been redeployed/made redundant?

**RESPONSE**

The council does not hold the information in the way in which the question is asked. The council does publish an annual workforce report which sets out details of our workforce including details on gender, ethnicity and disability. They can be found at:

[www.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/download/268/employment and equalities](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/download/268/employment_and_equalities)

The council does hold information on redundancy in the last three years, which is set out below.

**Gender**

Female	371	61%
Male	242	39%
Total	613	100%

**Ethnic Origin**

Asian	19	3%
Black	275	45%
Other	14	2%
White	285	46%
Mixed	14	2%
Not Stated	6	1%
Total	613	100%

**Grade Bandings**

Grades 2-6	142	23%
Grades 7-9	198	32%
Grades 10-12	128	21%
Grades 14-16	40	7%
Grades 17 & above	5	1%
Teacher grades	22	4%
Soulbury	19	3%
Building Workers	41	7%
Other	18	3%
Total	613	100%

Redundancy numbers in the grade bands are roughly proportionate to the numbers in those grades across the council.

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

What advice would the Leader give to residents with ongoing and regular noise complaints which the council's noise team are unable to monitor as they occur outside the team's operational hours?

**RESPONSE**

This Labour administration is committed to tackling the problem of noisy neighbours and the huge impact this can have on the wellbeing of others nearby.

Our noise team operates for 20 hours a day from 7am to 3am – during this time 97% of complaints are made. If there is a noise problem between 3am and 7am, residents can call our 24 hour call centre on 0207 525 5777 and will be advised that a noise officer will call them back to discuss the problem.

With ongoing and regular noise complaints, the noise team will work with the resident making the complaint and so they will be advised by the noise team about what action to take. At any time, day or night, if a resident is being caused significant alarm, harassment or distress or they believe that an emergency incident is happening then they should call the police.

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR REBECCA LURY**

How many council homes have been sold or demolished in Southwark since 2010 and how does this compare with the number sold or demolished under the previous administration from 2002 to 2010?

**RESPONSE**

1,044 council homes have been sold, removed or demolished since Labour took control. That is an average of 250 per year. This compares to 8,751 under the Liberal Democrats/Conservatives, an average of 1,093 per year – over four times more than Labour. This is also against a backdrop of the Liberal Democrat/Conservative government raising the right to buy discount and actively targeting Southwark estates to encourage more right to buy sales. This is already impacting our housing stock and this year we have had 930% more right to buy than 2009/10 – the last year of the Liberal Democrat/Conservative administration.

Labour has slowed the Liberal Democrat tide of home sales by selling off only those that are uneconomical, and investing the money into even more homes. The 11,000 new council homes which are currently underway is more than any other borough in the country. The Liberal Democrat alternative is to sit on their hands, complain and do nothing, whilst the need for new homes continues to rise.

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR STEPHEN GOVIER**

Following statements by members of his cabinet to the council assembly (council tax setting meeting) on Wednesday 26 February 2014 – will the leader, for each year since 2003 and until 2043 list:

- a) The number of actual and proposed council homes (the council rented stock as local authority rented landlord)
- b) The number of affordable homes (homes deemed affordable to those with a median household income which in Southwark in 2008 was £16,800)

c) The number of other social rented homes?

## RESPONSE

a) The table below sets out the number of homes in the council's rental stock, the number of other local authority homes in Southwark, and the number of housing association homes in the borough from 2003 up to date. The numbers are as at the end (31 March) of the year indicated.

Financial year	LBS rental stock	Other local authority stock	Housing association stock
2003/04	44,544	806	13,131
2004/05	42,863	1,024	13,636
2005/06	41,484	806	14,043
2006/07	41,026	802	14,403
2007/08	40,497	802	14,569
2008/09	39,827	802	14,849
2009/10	39,337	802	15,013
2010/11	39,062	802	15,404
2011/12	38,990	808	15,791
2012/13	38,787	808	15,977
2013/14	38,483 to date		

b) Future projections are not set on a year on year basis across the range of affordable housing types. The council has just embarked on the development of new 30 year housing strategy which will be adopted in 2015. The first principle is to use every tool at our disposal to increase the supply of all kinds of homes across Southwark. In terms of council stock, the council has set a target of building 11,000 new homes in the next 30 years. The strategy will also establish the principles for the ongoing asset management to plan and deliver a long term programme of investment in the council's housing stock. This will be delivered alongside our existing programme of major regeneration schemes at Elephant & Castle, Aylesbury Estate, Canada Water and beyond.

The delivery of new homes is guided by the planning process. The core strategy set a target of a minimum of 8,558 affordable homes to be delivered between 2011 and 2026. The London Plan currently sets an annual housing target of 2,005 net new homes a year for Southwark. In terms of affordable housing, the core strategy sets a minimum proportion in developments of ten or more units of 35% affordable housing.

## 5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI

How many council homes were built in Southwark between 2002 and 2010?

## RESPONSE

From 2002/03 to 2005/06 there were 365 new council homes built. From 2006/07 to 2009/10 there was one new home built and two hidden homes.

Government funding for affordable housing delivery has reduced significantly since the Liberal Democrat/Conservative government came to office. In the current 2011-2015 programme the average grant is £38,000 per rental home. This

compared to £117,000 per rental home in the 2008-2011 programme – when the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives managed to build just one new home.

All of this is against a backdrop of the Liberal Democrats losing 8,751 Southwark council homes.

#### **6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CHRIS BROWN**

During the last administration the Taxpayers Alliance criticised the council for having a £5.05 million publicity bill – the highest borough in London. Can the leader confirm if this bill has gone down and by how much?

#### **RESPONSE**

Under the previous Liberal Democrat/Conservative administration the Taxpayers Alliance highlighted that almost every single one of Southwark's departments was over budget, and that the council was making above-inflation council tax rises. In addition they revealed that the council was spending £5 million a year on publicity.

Under Labour the budget for communications next year is £1.02 million a year which includes events such as the Bermondsey Carnival, the Elephant and the Nun event and campaigns, including those relating to community safety and public health.

We have cut the number of editions of Southwark Life from ten to four per year and improved the standard and quality of it so that people read it and can find out more about what is happening in the borough.

It is important that the council has good quality communications to keep people informed about what is happening in the borough, to improve services and to ensure that residents can get the best from the council. But we need to make sure we get value from every penny we spend. Whilst the Liberal Democrats in Southwark make big claims on spending, their hopeless record is one of failure and waste.

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

How does the leader think existing residents will benefit from the approval of the Blackfriars Road supplementary planning document (SPD)?

#### **RESPONSE**

Blackfriars Road is a hot spot for development within the Bankside and London Bridge Opportunity Area as designated in the Mayor's London Plan. It is an immensely important link between the City and our key regeneration area at Elephant and Castle, establishing it as part of central London. The regeneration of Bankside and Elephant and Castle is bringing high quality new homes including affordable homes, a much improved environment and real job opportunities so that local people can benefit from employment and training.

Both existing and new residents around Blackfriars Road will benefit not only from the opportunities that are arising in the area with more jobs and employment, and the SPD will also ensure that the pressure for residential development is balanced with the need for places for leisure and business and a pleasant environment for people to live in and enjoy.

Any development needs to take place in a coordinated way so that Blackfriars Road reaches its potential and meets the needs of both existing and new residents. The SPD will provide a strategic framework and detailed guidance to coordinate future growth along and around the Blackfriars Road.

#### **8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER**

Following on from the success of National Apprenticeship Week, what are the leader's plans for expanding apprenticeships in Southwark and ensuring young people in the borough have access to education, training and employment opportunities?

#### **RESPONSE**

This administration is supporting people into work, education, training and apprenticeships. Under Labour, Southwark now has more jobs than Lambeth and Lewisham combined. However we want to go further, which is why the next Labour administration will support 5,000 local people into jobs and 2,000 new apprenticeships. We will also introduce a new Southwark Young Person Guarantee by making sure that our young people are ready for work and guarantee education, employment or training for every school leaver.

Currently 95.8% of year 12 students are participating in learning. The majority are in full time learning, whilst others have chosen the paid employment route that includes a significant training element. This figure represents a huge improvement on our performance under the Liberal Democrat/Conservative council five years ago when the level of participation was around about 85%.

In the last four years, we have already made great progress including:

- A dedicated team of participation education and training officers who work with young people to ensure that they can access a relevant and productive course of study post 16
- High quality sixth forms where young people can now choose from a wide range of academic courses and are enjoying success that matches or betters the rest of the country
- Working with the Education Business Alliance to ensure that young people are given many opportunities to experience the world of work
- Agreement with Lend Lease to partner in the Southwark Apprenticeship Scheme, which has the potential to provide extensive employment and career opportunities
- Southwark Youth Fund, opposed by the Liberal Democrats, which is continuing to providing £1 million per annum, for the next three years, to support a number of additional employment pathways and jobs, work based training skills and enhanced educational opportunities to young people in the borough
- Commitment to create 3% of its entry posts as apprenticeships to ensure that this is an achievable employment pathway for young people, which provides a blend of work based and academic learning to support them achieving their career aspirations.



**9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL NOBLET**

What action has the leader taken to help alleviate the issue of overseas buyers who buy up properties in Southwark and then leave them empty?

**RESPONSE**

The overriding reason why there is a shortage in new affordable housing, not just in Southwark but across the country, is because the Liberal Democrats in government slashed the social housing budget by 60% back in 2010 and that is on top of selling off and demolishing nearly 9,000 council homes in Southwark when they ran the council.

As they know, vacant homes are largely confined to very large value homes being kept as the occasional residence of extremely wealthy individuals. Most investors, either from home or abroad, rely on the income generating ability of their assets and therefore put them into the private rented sector to generate that income. The current government does not impose any restrictions on purchase of property be it commercial or residential by foreign investors.

Within the prime residential sector represented in Southwark by the highest value developments along the river, sales to foreign investors will make up a significant proportion. We are turning this situation to our advantage by using planning agreements with developers of a handful of the most valuable riverside sites to part fund the delivery of 11,000 new council homes. These council homes will be built across the borough, and represent the biggest council house building programme of its kind in the country.

Whilst the Liberal Democrats do nothing to fix the problem, we are getting on with building new council homes and stopping the mass sell off that happened under the previous administration.

**10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR RENATA HAMVAS**

What effect have cuts in government support for childcare had on parents in Southwark?

**RESPONSE**

The amount of financial support available for working parents for childcare costs was reduced in 2011, when the government cut support within the tax credit system. The independent 'Family and Childcare Trust' calculate that the average loss was over £500 per year for the half million families who receive this support, and up to £1,500 for families receiving the maximum help.

Families in Southwark continue to struggle with childcare costs. In government, the Liberal Democrats have made it harder for families. A conservative estimate of the Southwark Liberal Democrats policy is that their 15 minutes a day promise will cost £6.2million a year.

I do not believe that the best way to support families is to cut services across the council to a tune of £6.2 million to pay for just 15 minutes a day. Instead, the next Labour administration will invest in our children's centres to deliver more quality affordable childcare and build two new community nurseries.

We have launched a Childcare Commission under Dame Tessa Jowell MP to bring together experts, parents, providers and employers to find new ways to guarantee care and early education to help for parents and carers who are struggling to balance work and family life. I am confident that working with the community we will find long term support to parents. This approach will mean that we find a genuinely sustainable solution, rather than committing a budget that is double the size of our youth service, after-school and play services combined when the government is set to take another axe to our budget in 2015/16.

**11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL**

Does the Leader agree with his Labour colleague, Councillor Gavin Edwards, that performance-related pay does not boost staff performance?

**RESPONSE**

I agree with Councillor Edwards that performance-related pay (PRP) on its own does not boost performance. However, as part of an overall package of pay and incentive and when properly implemented it can have a real value.

The council has a small element of PRP as part of our packages for senior staff. This element of senior officer pay is part of the total package which is comparable to other similar local authorities. It is worth noting that senior officers were offered contracts containing the same PRP arrangements under the last Liberal Democrat administration. This Labour administration has taken a number of measures to ensure that senior officer pay is kept at sensible levels since our election in 2010

We now have an excellent senior officer team at Southwark, led by what is widely recognised as the best chief executive in the country. The reward packages for this team is something which we keep under review including what part PRP pays in any remuneration package.

**12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS**

Can the leader provide the latest figures on the number of people the council has supported into work?

**RESPONSE**

Since 2010/11, this administration has supported 2,576 Southwark residents into work through commissioned employment programmes, including Southwark Works and s.106 agreements (861 of these related to construction through s106). The next Labour administration will double this, and support 5,000 into work.

Southwark's January 2014 JSA claimant count is currently 8,305, the lowest it has been since March 2009. This represents a fall of 3,160 since the peak of 11,465 claimants in October 2011.

**13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL**

When is the council going to deliver the free childcare hours it voted to offer parents at January's council assembly?

**RESPONSE**

Yesterday, the leader of Lambeth Council, Councillor Lib Peck, and I launched the Southwark and Lambeth Childcare Commission which will be chaired by Dame Tessa Jowell MP. This Commission will bring together experts, parents, providers and employers to find new ways to guarantee care and early education to help parents balance work and family life.

Nationally, all the parties are setting out how they would support families with childcare. Tax breaks, funded additional hours and other schemes like this are best done nationally. This is because at a national level, government can commit the resources to make a real impact. The Liberal Democrats' local proposal will cost £6.2 million – the equivalent of 150 social workers – will pay for just 15 minutes help a day, and will not guarantee a single new quality childcare place needed for people to take up the offer.

This Labour administration think we need to be smarter about how we use the resources to have the biggest impact on families. We need to improve both quality and provision. Labour is also committed to funding additional hours for childcare but want to find the best way to do this. I will ask the commission to explore the best way of funding additional hours. We need to make sure that we get the best value for Southwark and the most help to parents. The Liberal Democrats' scheme won't do this; we will take the responsible approach to tackle the childcare crisis and will see this through when elected after May.

#### 14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR KEVIN AHERN

Liberal Democrat councillors have accused the council of 'wasting money' on catering and taxi bills – can the leader confirm whether the council's bills for catering and taxis are higher or lower than under the previous administration?

#### RESPONSE

Staff taxi costs have dropped from £246,000 under the Liberal Democrats to £52,000 a year under Labour – a reduction of 79%.

The table below shows the total spend figure for taxi transport (excluding VAT) for the financial year 2012/13 and previous years.

Financial year	Administration	Cost £,000
2007/08	Liberal Democrat/Conservative	226
2008/09	Liberal Democrat/Conservative	222
2009/10	Liberal Democrat/Conservative	246
2010/11	Labour	195
2011/12	Labour	65
2012/13	Labour	52

Similarly, the Liberal Democrats spent a whopping £2,765,000 on catering and refreshments in 2007/8 which we have brought down to £586,000 a year in the last full financial year.

Financial year	Administration	Cost £,000
2007/08	Liberal Democrat/Conservative	2,765
2008/09	Liberal Democrat/Conservative	1,765
2009/10	Liberal Democrat/Conservative	1,179
2010/11	Labour	913

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>Cost £,000</b>
2011/12	Labour	750
2012/13	Labour	586

These massive reductions in catering and cabs show that while Labour uses every penny as if it were from our own pocket, the Liberal Democrats' incompetence hit Southwark families hard.

**15. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER**

Can the leader confirm whether there has been any realistic offer to take over the South Dock and Greenland Dock Marina from the council? If not, how does he see the future of this valuable asset?

**RESPONSE**

There have been no realistic offers to take over the marina.

The council is investing circa £780,000 in new shower facilities, decks and electrical and water services. The marina is a net contributor to the council's revenue budget, and the enhanced investment makes it more attractive for both residents and leisure users so we expect this valuable asset to continue to contribute to revenue.

**16. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS**

Could the cabinet member list what measures are being taken to increase resident satisfaction with the quality of void properties and the numbers the council has turned around over the last four years?

**RESPONSE**

The budget was increased to fund an enhanced standard to the refurbishment of vacant properties of poor condition. The revised standard focuses on decorations, bathrooms and kitchens and allows tenants to move in without the need to undertake decorations. Previously, we would have provided new tenants with decoration vouchers. Now the property will be freshly decorated with, where appropriate, a new kitchen and bathroom fit for purpose. Not all properties will need new kitchens or bathrooms, but where the need is evident, this will be carried out within the voids program, and be on a case by case assessment.

Additional void technical officers have been employed to promote best value for money throughout the period of voids works, checking the progress of works on an ongoing basis, rather than leaving it to completion.

Contractors have formal weekly update meetings with the operational and lettings teams to address any arising issues and problems. Weekly meetings with team leaders and operational staff monitor the weekly status of all works in progress, properties let and voids due to arrive.

In the current financial year there is a drive to improve tenant satisfaction levels and reduce complaints. The void satisfaction survey provides conclusive evidence that tenants are in favour of the new enhanced standards. Satisfaction levels have increased by 17% to 89% YTD (95% for January 2014).

The total number of voids which have been re-let since 2010/11 is 7,041, as set out in the table below.

**All voids**

2010/11	2,179	
2011/12	1,639	
2012/13	1,803	
2013/14	1,420	(10 months)
<b>Total</b>	<u>7,041</u>	

**17. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GETTLESON**

Does he believe it is right that affordable housing payments negotiated as part of new developments in Bermondsey, such as the old town hall on Spa Road, should be taken out of the area and spent in communities over three miles away?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark faces a huge shortage of affordable houses. I think it is right that the council maximises the building of affordable houses, including with the use of section 106 money and should do this throughout the borough when sites become available.

The vast majority of affordable housing funds generated will be utilised through the Direct Delivery programme which will provide over 1,000 new affordable homes across the borough. The cabinet has agreed phase 1 and phase 2 of the programme including new housing in Grange ward on Willow Walk which is now underway.

**18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE (BERMONDSEY AND ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

In the next 10 years, how many residents are you expecting to live in Rotherhithe and where will they go to school? What percentage of students of Bacon's College live in Rotherhithe?

**RESPONSE**

The GLA population projections forecast that the population aged 5 to 14 in the Rotherhithe ward could increase from 1,356 in 2014 to 1,802 in 2024. It is anticipated that, as is the case now, pupils are likely to go to primary schools in the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe areas and secondary schools across the borough and in our neighbouring boroughs. The GLA population projections are fed into the GLA school roll projections that are used to prepare the council's school places strategy, which will meet the forecast demand for additional places.

The GLA London Schools Atlas includes information on Bacon's School's January 2013 pupil intake. It shows 18% of pupils coming from Rotherhithe and 12% from Surrey Docks ward. The rest of the pupils come from a wider area.

**19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN HAYES (DULWICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

In view of the up-coming "soft market testing" of the uses to which Dulwich Hospital site could be put, would the cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy outline the council's likely input to this process?

**RESPONSE**

Officers have met with and provided information to the NHS Property Services, and the Greater London Authority (GLA), to ensure the outline requirements for educational provision are included in the recently published soft market test brief. Initially our advice was to make provision for a primary school on site, but this has since been revised in light of this year's secondary school preferences in the south of the borough to press the case for a secondary school on the site.

Soft market testing responses are due to be received and reviewed by the NHS during April, when officers will hold further exploratory discussions with NHS Property Services, the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the GLA on the potential for secondary school provision alongside the proposed health service provision.

I would remind members that the Dulwich Supplementary Planning Document adopted by cabinet in July 2013 says:

A planning brief has been prepared for this site which sets out the objective to provide a framework for a mixed-use scheme comprising health facilities, ancillary office and community facilities and residential development. The use of part of this site for a school would help to meet the requirements of the planning brief. The site is also expected to play a significant role in meeting local health needs in Dulwich.

**20. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON (BOROUGH, BANKSIDE AND WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Given the recent closure of fire stations in the borough by the Mayor of London, will the council continue to pressure and lobby to regain more fire safety in the borough?

**RESPONSE**

The council's paramount focus is for the safety of our residents. The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority plan saw the closure of Southwark fire station and the loss of a tender at Peckham. This equated to the loss of approximately 50 fire fighters from the borough. I remain concerned that the removal of fire station, fire alliances and fire crews from the borough increases the risks to our vulnerable communities.

We have continued to work with the fire service in Southwark. In particular work on sheltered housing with joint programmed visits to all sheltered housing units, continued improvement measures on housing estates including comprehensive guidance for residents on fire safety advice, the agreement to retro-fit a number of sheltered housing and hostels with sprinkler systems; a specific programme on

hoarders to reduce the risk of fire. The council and fire service have worked together to deliver fire safety to students halls of residents.

In addition, the council's housing department have worked with the fire service to produce more comprehensive plans for estates which aid fire crews on arrival.

We will continue to lobby for the best future service for our residents whether that is one more fire station or an additional tender and crew who are familiar with the borough and can undertake more preventative work around fire safety.

**21. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR SOANES (PECKHAM AND NUNHEAD COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Do leaseholders have any discretion when alterations are required to their property such as installing new windows and doors? Do leaseholders have to agree to works arranged by the council when they have not been consulted on options and cost implications?

**RESPONSE**

A key component of the 1985 Housing Act has an obligation that, in the case of Right to Buy leases, the council is accountable for the maintenance of the structure, exterior, services and installations of the block in which a flat is situated. This statutory provision ensures there is one 'person' (i.e. the landlord) who is responsible for a block with different tenures and different owners of individual flats.

Integral parts of the block are windows – this is why the definition of the flat in Southwark's leases specifically excludes external windows (and doors).

The external doors and windows are the landlord's responsibility; and the final authority for repair, renewal, design solution etc. sits with the landlord.

The major works division conducts comprehensive consultation with all residents (regardless of tenure) before a package of works commences, including the gathering of opinions in regards to the scope of work. In addition, statutory consultation is carried out with leaseholders before any package of work starts on site. The statutory notices issued provide details of the proposed scope of works, the reasons why the council believes the work to be necessary and the total cost of the work, along with an individual estimated service charge. They also contain information of how leaseholders are able to inspect all the detailed documentation associated with the proposed scheme. Leaseholders are invited to make observations and given a 30 day period to respond. The major works division will also hold a public meeting for leaseholders during this period, which officers from home ownership services attend.

**22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR MARK WILLIAMS (CAMBERWELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

What steps are the council taking to make sure that drains and sewage works are maintained properly within the borough including those owned and operated by Thames Water?

## RESPONSE

We have embarked on a programme of repairing our non-functional gullies to facilitate a more effective surface water runoff management. The cyclical gulley maintenance programme has been revised to ensure areas prone to surface water flooding get more frequent gulley cleaning. Furthermore the street cleaning programme has been revised to take into consideration the risk of leaves blocking gullies.

Thames Water is a member of the South Central flood partnership and attends our quarterly meetings. They are therefore working collaboratively with us in our joint efforts to manage the risk of flooding. They are a strategic partner and are making a significant financial contribution towards the Herne Hill Flood Alleviation Scheme.

### 23. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL BUKOLA

What plans does he have to implement the Liberal Democrat Decent Homes Plus programme?

## RESPONSE

The fundamental difference between this administration's warm, dry and safe (WDS) programme and the Liberal Democrat's Decent Homes Plus Programme, is the renewal of kitchens and bathrooms.

Our scheme equates to the Government's Decent Homes Standard. The core principles are:

- **Warm** – modern functioning heating, well insulated roofs, windows in good condition or double glazed with secure locks, sliding window vents and restrictor hinges where needed, draught excluders on front doors, cavity wall insulation
- **Dry** – roofs, windows and building fabric in good condition, free from water penetration and damp
- **Safe** – modern electrics including rewiring where necessary, secure front doors (fire rated where necessary).

The WDS programme focuses on the properties most in need of refurbishment first and is scheduled to be completed in March 2016. The programme is on track and works have already been brought forward. Once the programme is complete, the asset management strategy will move on to internal refurbishment of properties, including the renewal of all kitchens and bathrooms that require replacement.

In terms of bathrooms and kitchens, WDS generally only completes kitchens where they fail on health and safety grounds under Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHRS) or in exceptional circumstances such as the Four Squares Estate. Bathroom components are undertaken if they are of sufficient age or disrepair.

Unlike the previous administration we have not misled Southwark residents. We are on course to deliver our Fairer Future promise of delivering our five year housing plan.



**24. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE BOWMAN**

What proportion of repeat calls to the customer call centre are housing related?

**RESPONSE**

Just under 14% of calls to the contact centre are repeat calls about housing repairs, i.e. the customer is calling about a repair that has already been raised.

**25. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR TIM MCNALLY**

How many empty homes are there in the borough? How many of these have been empty for more than a) six months and b) 18 months?

**RESPONSE**

The council does not keep a list of properties in the borough which are empty. Many of these are privately owned and so we only know if they are empty if the owners have applied for council tax exemption. Our most recent snapshot in December is set out below.

	<b>02/12/2013</b>
150% Levy on Long Term Empty Property	4
Empty over 2 months 0%	160
Empty Under 2 Months 100%	130
Uninhabitable/Works Required 0%	212
Unoccupied and furnished lets 0%	
Unoccupied and furnished lets 10%	
Unoccupied Awaiting Minister of Religion	
Unoccupied Awaiting probate	9
Unoccupied in Hospital/Residential Care	
Unoccupied in Prison	
Unoccupied Left Empty by Student(s)	
Unoccupied Probate granted < 6 months	
Unoccupied Providing personal care	
Unoccupied Receiving personal care	
Unoccupied Repossessed	2
Unoccupied: Left Empty by Bankrupt	
Total numbers of empty properties taken on snapshot date above	<b>517</b>

As part of this snapshot we do not record properties that have been empty for more than 6 or 18 months.

Over the year 2012/13 there were 2,668 properties that were at some time empty, and of these, 853 were empty for more than six months.

These figures do not include local authority or housing association properties. However on these, when a property becomes empty, we aim to turn it around and re-let within 22 days.

**26. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE**

What was the total council housing stock in May 2010? What is it now?

**RESPONSE**

The council's housing stock as at 1 May 2010 was 39,313.

The council's housing stock currently (figure on 17 March 2014) is 38,392.

The Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government has continued to support right to buy (RTB) which was recently extended and erode into our housing stock on a weekly basis. Up to 14 March 2014 we have lost 328 properties to RTB since 2010.

**27. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

How many properties and, specifically, acquired street properties have been made 'warm, dry and safe' in each ward since 2010? What plans does the council have to complete these programmes?

**RESPONSE**

Since the 'warm, dry and safe' programme was agreed:

- The Camberwell Street Properties Programme and the 2012/13 streets programme have completed (results by ward in table below)
- The 2013/14 streets programme is currently on site
- It is planned to complete the remaining streets programmes by March 2016.
- 612 tenanted properties received WDS works.

754 properties have received works under WDS (including some Leasehold)

The addresses are:

Alma Grove	Date Street	Kelvington Road	Oswyth Road
Ambergate Street	Evelina Road	Kimberley Avenue	Queens Road
Asylum Road	Friary Road	Kincaid Road	Raul Road
Athenley Road	Friern Road	Kings Grove	Shawbury Road
Bellwood Road	Gairloch Road	Kirkwood Road	Shenley Road
Brisbane St	Goodrich Road	Linden Grove	Southampton Way
Bushey Hill Road	Gordon Road	Linnell Road	Surrey Road
Carter Street	Graces Road	Lomond Grove	Tarbert Road
Cheltenham Road	Hawkslade Road	Longley Street	Tintagle Gardens
Cobourg Road	Hillcourt Road	Love Walk	Trafalgar Avenue
Coleman Road	Hindmans Road	Lynton Road	Trafalgar Street
Crofton Road	Jago Walk	Oakley Place	Urlwin Street
			Whateley Road

WARDS	Tenants	L/H	TOTAL
SOUTH BERMONDSEY	51	5	56
GRANGE	0	0	0
RIVERSIDE	0	0	0
CHAUCER	0	0	0
ROTHERHITHE	0	0	0
PECKHAM RYE	66	18	84
COLLEGE	0	0	0
THE LANE	63	5	68
FARADAY	30	2	32
BRUNSWICK PARK	99	56	155
CAMBERWELL GREEN	29	6	35
LIVESEY	22	6	28
CATHEDRALS	0	0	0
PECKHAM	27	2	29
SOUTH CAMBERWELL	0	0	0
EAST DULWICH	48	7	55
VILLAGE	5	1	6
NUNHEAD	53	15	68
EAST WALWORTH	37	4	41
SURREY DOCKS	0	0	0
NEWINGTON	82	15	97
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>754</b>

**28. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

What were the estimated and actual leaseholder service charges at the Four Squares Estate in each of the past three years available? What were the estimates for major works charges for each of the past three years?

**RESPONSE**

The estimated cost for leaseholders on the Four Squares Estate is outlined below.

The estimated/actual revenue service charges on the Four Squares Estate vary dependent on which block a particular flat is in and the size of the flat. The following table shows the modal figures for each bedroom size in each block for each financial year 2010/11 to 2012/13. Actual service charges for this financial year (2013/14) will not be available until October. Engineering type major works are not apportioned according to the size of the flat as agreed at Homeownership Council and are therefore set out as a simple list of major works carried out over the past three years.

**Annual Service Charges (Modal values)**

<b>Four Squares: Revenue Service Charges: Total per bedroomed property by Block</b>						
<b>Comparative total estimates and actuals for periods 2010/2011 to 2012/2013</b>						
<b>Bedrooms/Block</b>	<b>2012/2013 Total Estimate</b>	<b>2012/2013 Total Actual</b>	<b>2011/2012 Total Estimate</b>	<b>2011/2012 Total Actual</b>	<b>2010/2011 Total Estimate</b>	<b>2010/2011 Total Actual</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Properties: Bedsit</b>						
1 to 156 LAYARD SQUARE	1,455	1,594	1,520	1,813	1,464	1,565

<b>Four Squares: Revenue Service Charges: Total per bedroomed property by Block</b>						
<b>Comparative total estimates and actuals for periods 2010/2011 to 2012/2013</b>						
<b>Bedrooms/Block</b>	<b>2012/2013 Total Estimate</b>	<b>2012/2013 Total Actual</b>	<b>2011/2012 Total Estimate</b>	<b>2011/2012 Total Actual</b>	<b>2010/2011 Total Estimate</b>	<b>2010/2011 Total Actual</b>
3 to 188 LOCKWOOD SQUARE	1,406	1,626	1,448	1,734	1,372	1,475
2 to 185 MARDEN SQUARE	1,412	1,761	1,491	2,018	1,431	1,537
1 to 144 NEW PLACE SQUARE	1,547	1,843	1,712	1,810	1,444	1,710
<b>Properties: 1 Bedroom</b>						
1 to 156 LAYARD SQUARE	1,807	1,980	1,888	2,254	1,818	1,944
3 to 188 LOCKWOOD SQUARE	1,746	2,020	1,798	2,155	1,703	1,832
2 to 185 MARDEN SQUARE	1,753	2,189	1,851	2,510	1,776	1,910
1 to 144 NEW PLACE SQUARE	1,921	2,291	2,128	2,250	1,789	2,125
<b>Properties: 2 Bedrooms</b>						
1 to 156 LAYARD SQUARE	2,158	2,366	2,255	2,695	2,172	2,323
3 to 188 LOCKWOOD SQUARE	2,085	2,414	2,148	2,577	2,034	2,189
2 to 185 MARDEN SQUARE	2,093	2,617	2,212	3,003	2,121	2,282
1 to 144 NEW PLACE SQUARE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Properties: 3 Bedrooms</b>						
1 to 156 LAYARD SQUARE	2,491	2,734	2,605	3,118	2,508	2,683
3 to 188 LOCKWOOD SQUARE	2,406	2,789	2,479	2,979	2,347	2,527
2 to 185 MARDEN SQUARE	2,416	3,027	2,554	3,476	2,449	2,636
1 to 144 NEW PLACE SQUARE	2,651	3,169	2,837	3,112	2,462	2,937
<b>Properties: 4 Bedrooms</b>						
1 to 156 LAYARD SQUARE	2,824	3,102	2,889	3,540	2,843	3,044
3 to 188 LOCKWOOD SQUARE	2,726	3,165	2,810	3,382	2,659	2,865
2 to 185 MARDEN SQUARE	2,578	3,320	2,713	3,824	2,550	2,843
1 to 144 NEW PLACE SQUARE	3,007	3,599	3,133	3,534	2,790	3,334

### **Major Works Service Charges**

Billed March 2012

#### Emergency Lighting

Marden Square estimate - £484.27

Marden Square actual - £421.53  
 Layard Square estimate - £558.85  
 Layard Square actual - £483.08

Billed February 2013

Lift Renewal

Layard Square estimate £2,593.49  
 (Actual charges not yet known)

Billed February 2014

Security Works

Marden Square estimate - £12,192.90  
 (Actual charge not yet known)  
 New Place Square (fire doors only) estimate - £2,848.32  
 (Actual charge not yet known)

District Heating Pipes

Marden Square estimate - £1,790.19  
 (Actual charge not yet known)  
 Layard Square estimate- £1,790.19  
 (Actual charge not yet known)  
 New Place Square estimate- £1,790.19  
 (Actual charge not yet known)  
 Lockwood Square estimate- £1,790.19  
 (Actual charge not yet known)

**29. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON**

What is the council doing to tackle moss and slippy underfoot conditions in Gomm Road and other estates in Rotherhithe which are causing concern for residents? Will the cabinet member look at what can be done to improve this situation for residents?

**RESPONSE**

The council is aware of the issue in Gomm Road. The estate in question has asphalt pathways and brick-paving estate roads. There is a minor build up of algae/lichen between the pavings. The level of build up is usually not treated as the growth supports local biodiversity and tends to soften often quite hard landscapes. Algae, moss or lichen build-up usually occurs during the winter because of the wet weather and is usually found in shady, humid areas.

A joint inspection with the resident services officers (RSOs) and estate cleaning supervisors will be carried out during more inclement weather and in the meantime, RSOs and estate cleaning supervisors have also been asked to be aware of moss/algae growth and the risk of slippy conditions.

The cleaning arrangements across all Southwark housing estates includes a daily presence to conduct standard cleaning tasks which includes the sweeping of hard surfaces to remove loose debris. This sweeping is usually enough to keep moss and algae growth under control. During the course of that daily visit other issues are identified, including any hazards such as slippy underfoot conditions. The

removal of weed growth on hard surfaces is included in the standard tasks in the service level agreement although that is qualified so as to limit the amount of herbicide used to three applications a year to be applied between April and September.

No service requests have been received from residents for moss/algae growth in Rotherhithe in the last 18 months.

**30. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ROBIN CROOKSHANK HILTON**

Will the cabinet member please give an update on the current status of the warm, dry and safe works to the Lytcott Grove Estate. Why has this work been delayed?

**RESPONSE**

Lycott Grove Estates was scheduled for work in the original Warm, Dry Safe programme for 2015/16. It was agreed by cabinet in June 2013 to bring this forward into 2014/15. Preparations and feasibility studies have begun and work on site should start in the new financial year.

**31. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NICK STANTON**

Four years after promising to make every council home 'warm, dry and safe', why are there still ongoing damp and condensation problems in Southwark's housing blocks? What is it specifically doing to tackle the long-standing problems at the Arnold Estate?

**RESPONSE**

This administration's extensive Warm Dry Safe programme has invested over £330 million in order to improve the council's housing stock and renewing key elements such as roofs, windows, heating and electrical systems. These works have markedly increased the thermal efficiencies of council housing which is vital in reducing our carbon footprint and ensuring our residents' homes are warm and dry, as well as safe.

Condensation problems occur in blocks for several reasons but are mainly attributed to the moisture production in the properties regulated against the heating and ventilation levels.

As the council invests in reducing heat loss in blocks, the background ventilation is reduced (from old draughty windows, roofs, etc) and so the need for our residents to ventilate by use of ventilations systems and opening of windows becomes greater. Investigations into blocks across the borough where there are reports of condensation damp have often identified that ventilation systems are not always fully utilised.

The issues on the Arnold Estate are condensation problems which the council has aimed to resolve in line with other similar situations in the borough. The council has looked to educate residents through personal visits by council officers; sending out specific information on how to reduce condensation building up in properties and supplying damp packs to deal with minor mould issues. In addition to this, the

council has completed improvement works to a number of properties by installing thermal boarding and mechanical ventilation where required.

The reduced ventilation in the property leads to retaining greater moisture in the air, created through normal use and occupation, which results in condensation dampness. Another significant contributing factor to the formation of condensation dampness to blocks is fuel poverty. As heating bills increase residents become more hesitant to turn on their heating systems and tend to use them sporadically. The council has recently brought out a leaflet to advise residents how to ventilate their homes and prevent condensation.

**32. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU**

Given the current housing shortage and increase in residents sub-letting council flats from council tenants, does the council have any plan to raise awareness amongst our residents of the dangers and implications of renting a council flat without the council's knowledge?

**RESPONSE**

The housing department are acutely aware of the issue and have been pro-active in this area. Our tenancy checks in the last 12 months have recovered over 350 properties. We are also continually raising awareness amongst our residents of the dangers and implications of renting a council flat without the council's knowledge and regularly reporting our successful cases to the media so that both the legal and illegal tenants are aware of the actions and consequences.

Our fraud hotline (020 7525 4686) is advertised on the council's website and is included in mail shots, informs members of the public on how to contact the team with information.

In January 2014, Southwark launched a media campaign to publicise illegal subletting becoming a criminal offence. This campaign includes leaflets and posters, sending a hard hitting message that Southwark is not tolerating illegal subletting. With illegal subletting now a criminal offence, communications will utilise more hard hitting messages to highlight the risks involved, including prosecution, and will encourage tenants who illegally sublet to voluntarily hand back their keys or face jail.

Southwark was recently featured on London television programme 'Inside Out' on primetime. The programme showed the council using the latest technology, such as passport scanners and credit data matching, to detect and prevent fraud at the point of entry. This was invaluable publicity in raising awareness.

The council's outstanding work in fraud prevention was recognised nationally at the Local Government Chronicle awards on 12 March 2014 where Southwark won an award.

**33. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NICK DOLEZAL**

Could the cabinet member identify the checks that are in place to make sure that the council disposes of its empty properties wisely in accordance with its public duty?

## RESPONSE

The original void disposal strategy was agreed by the executive six years ago to provide resources for the housing investment programme and for the delivery of hidden homes. The following categories for disposal were identified:

- Bedsits, 1 and 2 bedroom properties located above the third floor if based within a block
- Properties valued in excess of £400,000, irrespective of bed size
- Leasehold units in blocks with a high percentage of leasehold properties, where additional sales can mean that the freehold can potentially be considered for disposal, either by leaseholder enfranchisement or direct sale
- Listed residential properties, irrespective of bed size
- Properties that are difficult to let
- Pre-fabricated homes – due to their high level investment need
- Properties that were uneconomical to repair.

A review of the strategy was completed in May 2011 because insufficient resources were being generated for reinvestment. The cabinet then agreed to include the following categories:

- Bedsits, 1 and 2 bedroom A and B street flats at first and second floors with a view to disposal of the freehold, thus widening to include properties where there are presently no other leaseholder present in the building, with the exception of ground floor units.
- Bedsits, 1 and 2 bedroom properties located on 3rd floor or above
- Void properties valued in excess of £300,000 irrespective of bed size.

To ensure that particular housing needs would continue to be met, the following exceptions were allowed for:

- Ground floor properties that may meet medical needs or are suitable for adaptation
- Properties suitable for re-housing households on regeneration schemes
- 3 bedroom+ family units withdrawn from the disposal process as a result of a review.

The cabinet also agreed to delegate all disposal decisions in respect of implementation of the policy to the head of property, and to the monitoring of the process by an officer panel and by the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management. These arrangements are ongoing.

All properties are subject to the appropriate legal general housing consents prior to disposal. In accordance with the council's constitution, the appropriate authority for disposal is sought. Authority for disposals of property up to a market value of £500,000 is delegated to the head of property, whereas authority to dispose of properties with a market value above £500,000 is reserved to cabinet.

The deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management has instructed officers to undertake a review of the current void strategy. The review is currently underway and a report is due to be submitted to cabinet in July 2014.



**34. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR THE RIGHT REVEREND EMMANUEL OYEWOLE**

Will the cabinet member describe what help is put in place by the council to enable those residents who are impacted by welfare reform measures to downsize their accommodation?

**RESPONSE**

The council has identified approximately 4,047 current residents impacted by the recent welfare reforms, including the bedroom tax and the benefit cap, both introduced last year.

Council services have been working in partnership with colleagues in the voluntary sector to provide assistance and advice to those affected by the welfare reforms. The council has offered directly, or working with others as well in the following areas:

- Job Centre Plus are holding joint surgeries with housing officers at Bournemouth Road to assist with identifying employment opportunities and work with London Mutual Credit Union to provide banking support and help improve financial inclusion.
- The Citizens Advice Bureau and housing officers are offering money management and welfare reform advice sessions for all new tenants to help them manage and maintain their new home.
- Collaborating with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and the Credit Union to create community champions and offer housing options support and advice to residents in the community.
- Undertaking monthly money advice and housing events (known as "money savvy") in partnership with the CAB, providing advice to residents affected by welfare reform.
- Increasing the incentive payment from £250 per bedroom released to £1,000 per bedroom, when a customer down-sizes through the SMART move scheme. Also includes tenants down-sizing through a mutual exchange.
- Promoting awareness of a lodging scheme to mitigate the impact of the bedroom tax. A booklet about taking in a lodger has been produced which provides advice about how to do this safely and successfully.
- Promoting discretionary housing payments (DHP) by post and telephone and use £1 million of housing revenue account funding to supplement the DHP budget for funding council tenants should the need arise.
- Housing and community services has appointed a mutual exchange officer to promote and facilitate tenants undertaking mutual exchanges.
- Housing operations identified those tenants affected by the bedroom tax and has targeted resources to visit these tenants and work with them at an early stage to manage the effects of welfare reform.

**35. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL COYLE**

Could the cabinet member comment on the success of the current annual tenancy checks in relation to identifying the amount of illegal occupancy uncovered to date, and on the cross-council departmental working to tackle internal fraud as identified by the Bundu case?

**RESPONSE**

Housing operations were set a challenging performance target to visit 100% of our tenants this year. There are a number of reasons why the council conducts annual tenancy visits – the key ones are adhering to our responsibilities as a council to safeguard the welfare to our tenants and ensuring that issues with subletting are communicated to the right channels and acted upon swiftly.

2013/14 has been our most successful yet on record. To date almost 90% of our tenancy visits have been carried out – this is 29,779 visits. Of the remaining tenants, the vast majority have had at least three visits and officers are moving to the next stages of the process, where this is appropriate. We aspire to be as thorough as possible as every home reclaimed is a home that can go to a deserving family. An increased drive on tenancy fraud has resulted in more than 600 council properties being recovered in the last two years, representing 12% of the national total last year.

The special investigation team in conjunction with housing operations have received over 1,800 referrals since April 2013. The vast majority of referrals come from resident officers and income officers, as well as gas servicing contractors. To date we have recovered 348 properties from illegal occupants, with 137 of these recovered from information of resident officers alone, as well as over 100 prosecutions in the last two years. This has resulted in the detection of council tax discount fraud valued at £2.1 million, and housing benefit saving almost £1.8 million.

Mr Bundu was successfully convicted to four years in prison last week.

Our success in combating illegal subletting and bringing homes back into use for those in genuine need, as well as prosecuting fraudsters, was recognised at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards on Wednesday 12 March 2014. The judges praised the council for "excellent impact tackling fraud across the borough and good evidence of learning."

**36. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NORMA GIBBES**

Could the cabinet member detail what are the plans for the council's implementation of fixed service charges to offer leaseholders cost certainty year on year?

**RESPONSE**

The innovative proposal to offer leaseholders the option to surrender their current variable service charge lease and renew it with a fixed service charge lease was

agreed by cabinet on 22 October 2013, subject to a report to be agreed by me, containing the detailed processes to be adopted in delivering the policy.

The draft report was taken to my weekly housing management briefing on 19 March 2014 and is on the forward plan for an individual decision member next month.

A press release on the proposal and a letter outlining further details will be sent to all leaseholders with the final quarterly statement for 2013/14, due to be issued mid April.

**37. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR LEWIS ROBINSON**

Following complaints I have received about the redacting of information on service charge breakdowns does the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management agree with me that at least where elected members raise works orders which are chargeable back and result in additional charges to leaseholders, they should be named as a matter of course for transparency in service charge breakdowns?

**RESPONSE**

Yes.

The councillor will know that where service charge breakdowns include the names and/or personal details of individuals this information must be redacted from the breakdowns before being made public. This action has been required by the Information Commissioner. However, councillors act in a public capacity and are not subject to the same restrictions when lobbying for particular action to be taken.

**38. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PODDY CLARK**

How much has been deducted by the council from payments to the major works contractors at Whitworth House and Bramwell House for failing to complete works to specification and schedule? What has been the result of the discussions regarding compensation for residents? Can the council assure leaseholders that there will be no further costs to them for major works on this project?

**RESPONSE**

The question possibly should relate to Whitworth and Ellington Houses rather than to Whitworth and Bramwell. This is because no works have been carried out to Bramwell House but there is a major works scheme for Whitworth and Ellington.

£105,384.35 has been held back from the last valuation paid to the original contractor (Breyer) for incomplete works. The council terminated the contract with Breyer and engaged A&E Elkins to complete the outstanding works. The council has agreed a payment to all residents, irrespective of tenure, as per the compensation policy. We will be writing to residents by 29 March to advise them of the basis of the compensation payments and the dates the payments will cover, which will be from 18 March 2013 (the date the Breyer contract should have been completed) to the completion date of outstanding works A&E Elkins will be carrying

out. The chair of the tenants and residents association, as well as the local councillors have been updated on the current situation.

The final account has yet to be constructed. The initial assessment of the final account indicates that there are no additional service chargeable costs and that there should not be an increase in the estimates issued.

**39. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR COLUMBA BLANGO**

How many incidents of theft of electrical and fire safety equipment have there been from council housing in each of the last three years?

**RESPONSE**

The maintenance and compliance team monitor metal thefts through their term contractors and inspection regime. The introduction of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 has seen a major reduction in reported thefts. The legislation introduced tougher licensing and prohibited the sale of metal for cash at scrap metal dealers.

The numbers of thefts identified are detailed in the table below.

	Fire equipment	Electrical equipment
2012	17	166
2013	6	44
2014	0	4

**40. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER**

How many new council homes are currently on site or have planning permission?

**RESPONSE**

Included in the detail are all schemes within Phase 1 of direct housing delivery and the hidden homes programme.

**New council homes on site**

Address	Tenure	Units
Willow Walk	Social rent	21
	Temporary accommodation rent	54
Dickens Estate*	Social rent	5

**New council homes with planning permission**

Address	Tenure	Units
Lordship Lane Estate*	Social rent	1
Champion Hill Estate*	Social rent	1
Glebe Estate*	Social rent	1
Lindley Estate*	Social rent	3
Pelican Falcon House*	Social rent	4
Nunhead Green	Social rent	8

Address	Tenure	Units
Gatebeck House, East Dulwich	Social rent	9
Southdown House	Social rent	10
	Intermediate	8

In addition, the following either have planning submitted or are due to be submitted shortly:

**Proposed new council homes with planning due to be determined in April**

Address	Tenure	Units
Long Lane, SE1	Social rent	21
Cator Street Extra Care	Social rent	42
Clifton Estate	Social rent	8
Masterman House	Social rent	15

**Proposed new council homes, planning to be submitted**

Address	Tenure	Units
Sumner Road	Social rent	50
	Intermediate	20
Crossways	Social rent	4

Overall	Tenure	Units
	Social rent	203
	Temporary accommodation rent	54
	Intermediate	28
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>285</b>

\*Hidden homes developments

NB. As part of the programme, 42 private homes will be developed at Sumner Road and 10 at Masterman House.

**41. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR PATRICK DIAMOND**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on funding allocated to open spaces around the Elephant and Castle regeneration area?

**RESPONSE**

A capital bid for £5.96 million (including contingency) to regenerate open spaces at Elephant and Castle was agreed in the capital refresh report which was considered by cabinet on 18 March. This project will seek to ensure the network of existing parks and open spaces within the opportunity area are brought up to a standard ensuring that they meet the needs of the existing and future community. At present the Elephant and Castle has a deficiency in open space provision and therefore this project will ensure that the open space that is available is of the highest quality. The programme for improvement will be approximately three years, including the required design, consultation and planning period.

<b>Park / Open Space</b>	<b>Investment</b>
Nursery Row	£600,000
St Mary's Churchyard	£1.25 million
Pullen's open space	£350,000
Victory Park	£1.8 million
Dicken's Square	£1.5 million
Green Links	£400,000

In addition to this council funding, there is a further circa. £17 million of investment section 106 from developments going into new and existing parks in the Elephant and Castle area including the new Elephant Park, (central London's largest new park for 70 years) Victory Park, the new Market Square on Elephant Road, and new pocket parks and play areas within the Heygate master plan area.

<b>Park / Open Space</b>	<b>Investment</b>
Tribeca Sq/Elephant Park/Pocket Parks within Heygate Masterplan	circa £17 million

**42. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN HAYES**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the number of new homes that have been given planning permission in Southwark since 2010?

**RESPONSE**

11,975 gross from April 2010 – November 2013, of which 2,918 gross are affordable new homes.

**43. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR SUNIL CHOPRA**

Is the cabinet sufficiently prepared to deal with flooding in Southwark in light of government cuts to funding for lead local flood authorities?

**RESPONSE**

We are all too aware of the problems associated with flooding in the borough, especially in terms of the potential or actual damage or harm caused to people and their property. We are raising local awareness of flood risk by keeping the community informed at public meetings, carrying out detailed flood investigations, and are coordinating the external flood partnership with Lambeth which has been recognised as the most thriving flood partnership in London. Alongside this, we are working to ensure that the council has robust response plans in place.

Following the preliminary flood risk assessment, locations within the following areas were identified as having a higher risk of flooding than other areas: Herne Hill, Dulwich, Camberwell, Peckham, and Nunhead and Peckham Rye. Upon further study it has been confirmed that Herne Hill and the Dulwich area are at a relatively higher risk of flooding and would benefit greatly from flood alleviation measures.

The council has successfully applied for funding from the Environment Agency to undertake detailed investigation of the Herne Hill and Dulwich areas and has

subsequently secured additional funding from both the Environment Agency and Thames Water to implement a surface water and sewer flooding mitigation scheme. The scheme is at planning application stage (a decision expected on 25 March 2014) and subject to approval work due to be on site by the end of April.

The scheme has already been recognised as innovative and is being held up as model of partnership working and as an urban surface water management scheme.

In the Camberwell area, the council obtained funding from the Environment Agency and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to undertake detailed investigation of the flooding risk and identified opportunities to alleviate this. We are exploring funding opportunities for detailed design and implementation. In the process we have secured grants from the GLA to undertake two pocket park schemes. The schemes will not only reduce surface water flood risk but also enhance the amenity value of the areas selected, Southampton Way and Comber Grove.

Working in close partnership with Thames Water, the Environment Agency and the GLA, we have also secured 20 water butts for the Wells Way Triangle Tenants and Residents' Association in the Camberwell area to enable improved individual water management capacity.

Staff across the organisation have a key role since the government delegated responsibility for flood prevention to local councils. We are making a difference to the way departments work, with flood risk awareness being actively raised among our teams through our internal flood partnership. A well established link between the flood team and the planning department has ensured surface water management issues are being considered early in the design of new developments.

We have embarked on a programme of repairing our non-functional gullies to facilitate management of surface water run-off more effectively. The cyclical gulley maintenance programme has been revised to ensure areas more prone to surface water flooding get more frequent cleaning.

The table below shows funding allocations to Southwark Council and projected spend:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Original Allocation (£000)</b>	<b>New Allocation (£000)</b>	<b>Other Grants (£000)</b>	<b>Spend/Projected (£000)</b>
2011/12	182.8	182.8		176
2012/13	438.2	438.2	160	268
2013/14	438.2	438.2	310	560
2014/15	438.2	435.5 (1.5% cut)	780*	1080
2015/16	438.2	350.3 (19.6% cut)	725*	400
2016/17	Unknown	Unknown		600
2017/18	Unknown	Unknown		500
	1935.6	1845	1975	3584
<b>Total</b>	<b>1935.6</b>	<b>3820</b>		<b>3584</b>

\* includes funding for the implementation and maintenance (£0.3 million) of the Herne Hill Scheme over the life of the project.

The team will continue to pursue opportunities for additional grants; and we are hopeful that these funding reductions will not have a significant impact on services.

Lastly, I wish to put on record that it is a source of great pride to me the way that the public realm asset management team have adapted and thrived following delegation of flood alleviation and management to local authorities. I am optimistic that despite the considerable cuts in grant by central government (esp. 19.6% in 2015-16) the team will continue to develop our borough's resistance to the threat of surface and drainage water flooding, which will increase with the weather changes linked to the changes in the Earth's climate.

**44. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the council's use of Article 4 planning directions to curb the growth of betting shops and payday lenders?

**RESPONSE**

Our ability to manage the balance of uses on the high street and proliferation and clustering of individual uses is constrained by the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) which allows a change of use from class A3 (restaurants and cafes), class A4 (drinking establishments) and class A5 (hot food takeaways) to uses in class A2 (financial and professional services, including betting shops and pay day loan shops) without the need to apply for planning permission.

Moreover, in May last year the government introduced new permitted development rights that aim to allow redundant buildings to be brought back into use. The effect of the revised GPDO is to allow a range of buildings to convert temporarily for a two year period to a set of alternative uses, including betting shops and payday loan shops, without the need for planning permission. These new development rights are often in conflict with our policies which are aimed at regenerating high streets and town centres.

As a borough with one of the highest concentrations of betting shops, we have taken steps to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect local economic activity as our ambition is to have successful town centres and shopping areas which have a range of shops, services and facilities. We oppose the clustering and proliferation of payday lenders and betting shops on our high streets and believe they have a negative impact on the vitality of town centres and the wellbeing of our residents.

The planning committee therefore introduced two immediate article 4 directions as a means to control certain uses, and removing permitted development rights. Immediate article 4 directions expire six months after they come into force, unless confirmed by the council. Consultation on the two directions was undertaken for a period of six weeks following their introduction last October 2013. Three objections were received which included Ladbrokes plc, Paddy Power and the Association of British Bookmakers. According to the relevant planning regulations, these representations must be taken into account by the council in determining whether to confirm the directions.

The consultation responses received have been fully considered and the evidence base has been set out more clearly to ensure there is a fuller understanding of all



of the issues and concerns that have been raised and considered. A report is being taken to planning committee on 25 March 2014 which sets out the justification for the continued implementation of the two directions and recommends they are both confirmed before the expiry date of 17 April 2014.

Since the article 4 directions were implemented back in October 2013, there have been no planning applications submitted for a change of use to betting shops or pay-day loan shops in any of the shopping frontages covered by the directions.

Article 4 directions are not however our only response to the damaging increases in high street gambling in some of the poorest parts of our borough. I have raised my concerns with the Planning Minister, Nick Boles MP, as to the use of article 4 directions since they do not allow us to refuse outright applications for change of use if an application is made. Instead we would support the ability to place betting shops in a separate use class, in order to limit the detrimental growth of betting shops in Southwark. Nick Boles MP has commended our innovative and proactive approach to addressing this issue.

The leader has also written to the Secretary of State for Communities, Law and Governance to request greater powers to set levies on the income of high street betting shops – though the government have not supported our call, I do hope that they will look to afford local councils with the powers that we need to tackle this problem.

**45. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the regeneration in Peckham, including the Gateway to Peckham project and town centre improvements?

**RESPONSE**

The council intends to improve Peckham as a successful place with a new regeneration project that is focused on Peckham town centre. Drawing on the vision statement that has been agreed with the community in the Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan (PNAAP), and to initiate delivery the council will carry out further research and provide opportunities for the community to have their say to help establish the key concerns and priorities, and to help us to further define the scope of the programme. Ahead of this there are three regeneration projects already underway.

**Gateway to Peckham Project**

The Gateway to Peckham project provides an exciting opportunity to bring about much needed improvements to the Victorian grade II listed Peckham Rye Station and the area around it. It will help to create a high quality public square with improved commercial premises, and improvements to the station itself.

However, significant local concerns have been expressed about the initial designs, scope and scale of the proposals for redevelopment and as a result it has been agreed that there should be a longer period of time for consultation and discussion using co-designing principles.

**Pocket Places Project**

The Pocket Places project funded by the council and run by Sustrans has been working on transforming under used spaces along Rye Lane into lively community spaces.

On 7 June 2014 there will be a large event to demonstrate all of the ideas that have been developed by community members over the last year. This will come in the form of a celebration event showing trial interventions over four sites. These include temporary resurfacing to create a park feel in Holly Grove, 16 fruit trees planted in shiny industrial bins with integrated seating in Moncrieff Place; a modern day bandstand and a rotating artist in residents programme in the corridor in Choumert Grove car park and community gardens with a food inspired mural and street games in Bournemouth Close.

These ideas are all going to be trialled for up to six months with the more successful projects becoming permanent with a completion date of July 2015.

The project also aims to deliver a temporary surface pattern on Rye Lane to encourage motorists to slow down in this area where there is heavy pedestrian usage. This will be on Rye Lane between Blenheim Grove and Elm Grove.

### **Townscape Heritage Initiative**

Also on 3 March 2014, we submitted a £1.7m stage 2 Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). This HLF is for a programme of grants that help communities to regenerate Conservation Areas displaying particular social and economic need. The programme is aims to help building owners to carry out repairs, conservation and restoration works to deliver heritage-led regeneration.

The proposed THI will work within the PNAAP vision and address the need for improvements to historic buildings in the town centre, complementing existing public realm improvements. The project will focus on tackling building decay and the reinstatement of lost architectural detailing, as well as encouraging the reuse of upper floors and complementary initiatives in building local community capacity in traditional skills, education and involvement in the local heritage.

#### **46. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR CLAIRE HICKSON**

How many empty homes has the council helped bring back into use since 2010?

#### **RESPONSE**

Since the beginning of this administration we have ensured that we utilise every opportunity to not only bring back into use empty homes across the borough, but are also making every effort to provide homes for the colossal number of people that we have on our waiting list. We are highly oversubscribed, with over 20,000 people waiting for a new home.

Since 2010 the council's interventions have brought back 545 empty homes back into use.

The empty homes team actively seek out owners of empty properties and work closely with them to find ways to bring their properties back into use. We also provide limited incentive funding in the form of grants and loans for homeowners to

carry out repairs, conversions or refurbishment works to their properties, and can help owners by identifying options where they wish to rent their property through the council or our partners. Empty homes owners can also receive advice from our teams to better understand the issues that are currently preventing them from making use of their properties, including receiving guidance through the planning process, design advice, or where there is need guidance on the construction process if they wish to undertake repair or rebuild projects themselves.

I am especially proud of the work of the empty homes team for this, as working with homeowners whose properties have been in a long state of disrepair can be a challenging process. There is often a marked difference in the costs associated with reusing local homes as compared to some of our South East London regional boroughs. As an example, in Southwark, the average repair costs for a property that has been empty for over 6 months is £48,000 as compared to £15,000 in Bexley, due to the differences in the type and quality of housing stock and associated refurbishment.

**47. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY FROM COUNCILLOR DARREN MERRILL**

How many affordable homes have been built in Southwark since 2010?

**RESPONSE**

**Affordable Housing Completions 2010/11 – 2013/14**

	Social Rent	Intermediate	Affordable Rent	Total
2010-11 (Actual)	335	432	0	<b>767</b>
2011-12 (Actual)	466	142	24	<b>632</b>
2012-13 (Actual)	450	150	0	<b>600</b>
2013-14 (Projected)	309	196	28	<b>533</b>
Total	1560	920	52	

**48. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ROWENNA DAVIS**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on what the council is doing to combat domestic violence in the borough?

**RESPONSE**

The council is delivering range of projects to combat domestic abuse. Despite the massive financial pressures faced by the council, there have been no budget reductions for this area of work. Indeed, we in fact increased the money spent on tackling this abuse by approximately £80,000 in 2013/14 and are committed to maintaining a high quality service in 2014/15.

When the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives ran the council there was no plan in place to tackle violent crime: Labour has delivered a violent crime strategy and violent crime is falling.

Violence against women and girls formed one part of the Violent Crime Strategy and since 2010 we have made progress with a range of project that I detail below. However, I believe that we need to go even further and make tackling all forms of

domestic abuse one of the top priorities for the next administration. That is why, Labour is committing to work with the police to deliver a new Domestic Violence Strategy to combat this abuse wherever it exists in our borough.

Work that the council is already doing to combat domestic violence includes:

**Southwark Advocacy and Support Service (SASS) provided by Solace Women's Aid**

In April 2012, the council commissioned SASS, a new service for victims of domestic abuse in our borough.

- An accredited borough wide flagship service, with a new centre for domestic violence and a one phone number and one email for all domestic abuse related issues
- 24/7 access to the service, with male and female advocates and a response time to high risk victims of 4 hours
- Services for all victims of domestic abuse over 16 years of age, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation
- Two specialist support programmes for children and young people, with parallel workshops for mothers
- Domestic abuse awareness training for external agencies and a domestic abuse champions training for professionals. so that they are able to recognise the signs of domestic abuse at the earliest opportunity and are confident signposting victims for help
- A sub contracted perpetrator programme
- A service user forum
- A volunteer programme, open to local residents
- Peer support programmes

Since the service was launched in April 2012, over 2500 people have been in contact with the service and 46 perpetrators have been referred to programmes to help them change their abusive behaviour. The service has worked intensively with 1166 survivors and most of them now report increased mental, emotional, social and physical well being and increased resilience, confidence and self esteem.

The service has expanded over the last year with additional counselling and legal advice services, incorporation of the sanctuary scheme (enabling victims to remain safety in their own homes) as well as service user engagement and peer support groups. A domestic abuse worker is now co-located on a weekly basis with the children services family support team and at Peckham and Walworth Police Stations to ensure that survivors of domestic abuse can access help and support at the earliest opportunity.

77 council and SLaM staff have been on the domestic abuse champions training for professions, from departments including Housing management and specialist housing services, community safety, youth offending, children's services, and customer experience.

A successful borough-wide domestic abuse awareness campaign was launched in December 2013 which included bus stop ads, ads in Southwark news, posters distributed to all surgeries and libraries, two radio programmes, a cinema ad (at Peckham Multiplex) and twitter feeds; since its launch, SASS are reporting an increase in self referrals.

### **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**

The council works closely alongside other agencies to ensure the safety of women at high risk of domestic violence. Key Southwark statutory and non statutory agencies meet once a month to discuss the highest risk victims who live in Southwark. The MARAC also give consideration to the perpetrator and looks at what intervention is available for them too. So far this financial year this multiagency conference has helped over 200 survivors at high risk of harm.

- **Safe, Healthy and Equal Relationships (SHER)**  
The council also focuses on prevention work, for example the SHER programme, which delivers sessions in schools to increase awareness of what is and isn't a healthy relationship and prevent children and young people from becoming victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse in the future.
- **Tackling violence against women and girls pilot projects**  
The council was successful in its bid to the London Crime Prevention fund for funding in 2013/14; receiving £116,000 to deliver new projects to help tackle violence against women and girls.
- **Counselling programme for domestic abuse and sexual violence survivors**  
1-2-1 and group work counselling provided by SASS. Since its launch in June 2103, the service has worked with 36 survivors.
- **King's College Hospital A&E pilot**  
King's College Hospital A&E Girls' pilot project is delivered by the Redthread youth team. The service works with young females presenting at A&E with injuries caused by physical violence to enable them to improve their sexual health, mental health and engagement with statutory services.
- **Mobile phone safety app**  
A free smart phone app to help women/young girls stay safe. Tap-It was launched in early 2014 and allows users to set up networks of 'best friends' to stay connected with family and friends and allow them to ask for assistance when they are feeling vulnerable.
- **YUVA (work with adolescent perpetrators)**  
Yuva works with young people (age 11-25) who have been abusive to their parents/carers and in their close relationships. Yuva help young people to look at their abusive behaviour and find safe, non-abusive alternatives. The team also work with the parents/carers of the young people who are involved with their service.

#### **49. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR DENISE CAPSTICK**

What is the cabinet member's view about investing the staff pension fund into new homes for market rent or sale, similar to the scheme already undertaken by Manchester City Council?

#### **RESPONSE**

Manchester City Council does not have its own personal pension fund – instead it is covered by a single fund covering all ten of the local authorities in Greater Manchester. The value of that fund is almost thirteen times the size of Southwark's.

Having a fund covering a number of authorities in this way helps to reduce the risk of the fund being used inappropriately to fund political priorities that might not generate the best returns for the fund.

This is why Southwark is entirely involved in the discussions with other London authorities seeking to establish a common investment vehicle (CIV) for the capital that could consider making investments in new areas such as residential development or infrastructure building in a way that would both maximise potential returns from them (done to scale) whilst minimising the risk of inappropriate investments being made to suit short-term political objective.

As is the case for all investments made by the fund, any such investment would need to fit into the funding investment strategy which members will be aware is currently being reviewed by the Pensions Advisory Panel. Investments must also provide at least equivalent returns as other asset classes within an acceptable level of risk after taking into account the management fees incurred which can vary widely across different asset classes. Investment returns must be optimised in order to maintain a controlled deficit position and deficit recovery period and be compatible with the results of the actuarial triennial valuation which is currently being carried out.

**50. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK**

What has the council done to ensure work at Southwark Park athletics track gets underway, other than putting out a press release? When will the track be brought back into use?

**RESPONSE**

We have taken action to ensure the refurbishment of the track and facilities.

All members know that the council had to start from scratch in terms of funding and planning from May 2010. £370,000 of funding towards track refurbishment was granted by the Olympic Legacy Fund in 2011. We have since secured £1.1 million of additional funding for the track. The design of the whole facility has now been finalised and we will be submitting a planning application at the beginning of April 2014. We anticipate the project will begin in late summer 2014.

Cabinet agreed on 18 March 2014 further capital expenditure to complete the whole facility: Quarter 3 Capital Monitoring Report for 2013/14 and Capital Programme Refresh for 2013/14 – 2023/24. As the future programme proudly outlines, “money will be provided to refurbish Southwark Park athletics track and providing new pavilion and changing facilities there.”

Action from this administration is in stark contrast to the Liberal Democrats on the council. They had years to sort this out and failed. That is why we were starting from scratch when we were elected. Since May 2010, not a single Liberal Democrat councillor has ever approached me expressing concerns about the progress of refurbishment, they have never asked to meet with me and have never

lobbied me for any funding. Local residents are right to be sceptical about the Liberal Democrats' commitment to this which to date has involved a press release, photo call and a small piece on their website.

**51. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL KYRIACOU**

What is the future of the Blue Anchor Playroom premises? What plans does the council have to sell the site to private nursery providers or other buyers?

**RESPONSE**

We have previously used the building for play services; however it has not been used by children's services for at least five years, other than for storage. There are no current plans for us to deliver services at the Blue Anchor Playroom premises.

We can undergo an appraisal assessment to identify potential future uses for the premises.

**52. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN**

The council predicts that some 18 forms of entry for secondary school pupils are needed by September 2019. While recognising that secondary pupil place planning is carried out on a borough-wide basis, what evidence has the council collected on supply and demand in each of the five community council areas - especially those facing major regeneration projects - as a basis for ensuring that children do not have to travel long distances to schools in other parts of the borough or outside the borough?

**RESPONSE**

The information collected on supply and demand in the five community council areas includes:

- The Greater London Authority (GLA) population projections, which feed into the GLA school roll projections, and which take into account the possible additional population as a result of the new housing in the borough
- Expressed preferences for school places which, along with the GLA school roll forecasts, inform the council's school places strategy.

**53. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER**

How many complaints have there been about the conduct of vehicles operated by the council and its contractors since 1 January 2011? Please list details of each complaint, including the date and the action taken by the council.

**RESPONSE**

With a fleet of over 300 commercial vehicles used by council staff in the borough, all clearly marked with the Southwark Council logo, we take complaints about poor driving seriously as such incidents can damage the reputation of the council as well as cause a risk to other road users.

We encourage responsible driving by our staff and contractors, and value the role of the public in reporting poor driving via both the council's customer service centre and the DriveCare 'How is my driving?' system.

Complaints received directly by the council are captured on ICase, the council's complaint management system. Table 1 below shows how many complaints we have received on ICase since 2011 related to the driving of Southwark and contractor vehicles. It is not possible to provide in-depth details for confidentiality reasons and limitations in the reporting ability of the system but the most common reason for complaints are poor driving, causing an obstruction, inappropriate behaviour when challenged about driving and damage to other vehicles. Every report received is sent to the relevant management team for investigation.

Complaints recorded on the council's ICase system are reported below in Table 1:

**Table 1**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Total</b>
2011	Cleansing Services	Upheld	4
	Gas & Heating team	Upheld	1
	Waste management and collections	Not upheld	3
		Partially upheld	1
	Upheld	3	
2012	Cleansing Services	Partially upheld	1
		Upheld	3
	Conways	Not upheld	1
	Parks and open spaces	Not upheld	1
	Possibly SBS	Withdrawn	1
	Public realm projects	Upheld	1
	Recycling and collection	Upheld	2
	School Transport	Withdrawn	1
Waste management and collections	Not upheld	1	
	Partially upheld	1	
	Upheld	2	
2013	Cleansing Services	Not upheld	3
		Upheld	1
		Withdrawn	1
	Community Warden Service	Upheld	1
	Home Ownership and TMI Team	Not upheld	1
	Major Works	Upheld	1
	Recycling and collection	Not upheld	2
		Partially upheld	1
		Upheld	2
	Repairs Mears	Upheld	1
Temporary Accommodation	Not upheld	1	
Waste management and collections	Not upheld	10	
	Upheld	9	
2014	Cleansing Services	Upheld	2
	Repairs	Upheld	1
	Recycling and collection	Upheld	1
	Repairs Mears	Not upheld	1
		Upheld	2
Waste management and collections	Upheld	3	



Year	Team	Outcome	Total
<b>Total</b>			<b>71</b>

Complaints received through DriveCare are shown below in Table 2. Complaints received through the DriveCare reporting system typically relate to concerns about safety, parking and causing an obstruction to the highway. We are unable to provide details of action taken against the driver as this is an employment matter but as with the council's own reporting system, every report received is sent to the relevant management team for investigation.

**Table 2**

Year	Department	Number
2011	Cleansing services	15
	Building services	7
	Wardens	1
	Library service	1
	Property	1
	Pool car	1
2012	Cleansing services	6
	Building services	5
	Pool car	1
2013	Cleansing services	6
	Building services	14
	Wardens	1
	Play service	1
	Highways	1
	Temporary accommodation	2
	Enforcement	1
2014	Cleansing services	5
	Building services	3
	Highways	1

**54. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR GEOFFREY THORNTON**

How many new cycle stands does the council intend to install across the borough this year?

**RESPONSE**

The council has installed 253 on-highway cycle parking spaces at 139 sites in the financial year 2013/14.

For the 2014/15 financial year, a programme is yet to be agreed. Funds are available from Transport for London (TfL) for cycle parking and other sustainable transport initiatives, although not ringfenced specifically to cycle stands so figures cannot be verified at this stage.

Figures for previous years are:

- 2010-11: 20 stands, 40 spaces
- 2011-12: 71 stands 139 spaces

- 2012-13: 55 stands 100 spaces

We currently have plans to install five on street secure 'cycle hangers' in a trial funded by TfL's local implementation plan discretionary fund (£30,000) in the next two months. Cleaner greener safer funding in 2014/15 has also been allocated for the installation of a further three hangers, two in Dulwich and one in Peckham.

In addition, since May 2010 we have also installed 479 lockers on 46 estates (18%) with a further 261 to be installed this financial year.

The breakdown for cycle lockers on estates is as follows:

2010/11	177
2011/12	171
2012/13	131

**55. QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FROM COUNCILLOR TOBY ECKERSLEY**

Would the chair of overview and scrutiny committee (OSC) outline progress on considering, and helping implementation of, measures to reduce the unfairness faced by leaseholders to be displaced by the regeneration of the Aylesbury Estate, notably as exemplified by their representations to OSC on 10 March 2014?

**RESPONSE**

OSC held two meetings on this topic - at the first session we heard from council officers about the policy context. We went on to hear from a number of leaseholders who are in the process of buyback or have already been through it and wanted to feed back their experience. The committee made a number of recommendations to cabinet covering the accessibility of the options open to leaseholders in this situation, the benefit of the valuations cases presently in hand, better promotion of the existing sources of advice to leaseholders, and the provision of independent surveyors' advice.

I am grateful to the cabinet for allowing time for our recommendations at last week's meeting, and I look forward to hearing a positive response in due course

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****(ORDINARY)****WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014****QUESTIONS ON REPORTS****7.3 - PAY POLICY STATEMENT****1. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

At the February council assembly meeting, the cabinet member agreed to review the council's pay policy so that pay structures are less complicated and it is easy for anyone to know how much a member of staff on a particular grade is paid. What progress has he made on this commitment?

**RESPONSE**

At the last council assembly (26 February), I was asked whether, in the spirit of transparency, I would commit to reviewing the pay award system that currently exists to ensure it was really for the benefit of council tax payers.

I made clear that the council regularly review our workforce strategy including pay and how we look at performance and rewarding good performance in our staff. I can confirm that I have started the process of a review of pay, including the options on amending how the total package is made up. The first stage of this process is to receive independent advice on the current market conditions and how our packages compare. This has already been commissioned by the director of HR. We will then consider options for any changes to our pay policy in line with normal governance procedures and employment law.

As indicated in the report, it is a statutory requirement that we agree annually in advance our policy on pay for the coming financial year 2014/15. Paragraph 10 of that report makes clear that the current performance related pay arrangements, based on measurable achievements, are a contractual element of individual's pay. Therefore, following the conclusion of the pay review which we have started, if it was decided to make any changes to the terms of those contracts, we would need to negotiate any amendment with affected employees. The timetable for review and negotiation mean that any substantial changes agreed during the coming year would then be reported in the pay policy report that council assembly considers for the 2015/16 financial year.

I can also confirm that I have met with the director of Human Resources to discuss how performance related pay will work in 2014/15, in particular ensuring that performance related pay is truly based on measurable achievements.

## AMENDMENTS

### REVISED AMENDMENT G

**ITEM 5.2 – MEMBERS’ MOTIONS: MOTION 1 – LOCAL DECISION MAKING** (see page 16 of the main agenda)

### REVISED AMENDMENT G

**Moved:** Councillor Darren Merrill  
**Seconded:** Councillor Sunil Chopra

In paragraph 1, after “neighbourhoods” **add**:

Council assembly notes that the government has devolved some powers to local councils, such as neighbourhood plans, community right to bid and community right to challenge. However, council assembly is concerned that despite its rhetoric, the coalition government has failed to really deliver localism properly and has in fact centralised more decision making in Whitehall.

Council assembly notes that the coalition government has imposed new limits on the ability of councils to make local decisions on schools, council tax, or how we speak to the community. Council assembly notes with concern that the coalition government has now acquired sweeping powers to shut down hospitals at short notice without local consultation, even if they are performing strongly, despite opposition by Labour MPs.

**Delete** “therefore” and 2i. Renumber paragraph 2 accordingly.

After paragraph 2 **add**:

3. Council assembly:

- Welcomes work by Labour councillors and Val Shawcross AM to tackle the issue of slow broadband in Rotherhithe and Surrey Docks.
- Condemns Liberal Democrats councillors and Simon Hughes MP for failing to deliver on this issue for local people in the area.
- Welcomes that the leader of the council is working with broadband providers to discuss progress on the issue of slow broadband in the Rotherhithe peninsula and pressing them to take meaningful action.
- Welcomes Southwark Labour’s commitment to bring superfast broadband to Rotherhithe.

4. Council assembly:

- Welcomes Southwark Labour’s commitment to open new secondary schools in the borough including one in East Dulwich.
- Notes that the Supplementary Planning Document for the East Dulwich hospital site states that “The use of part of this site for a school would help to meet the requirements of the planning brief”.

- Calls on cabinet to work closely with the steering group and deliver a new secondary school on the East Dulwich hospital site, rather than the following the Liberal Democrats suggestion of embarking on a long winded and unnecessary bureaucratic exercise of amending the planning brief, which in any case already allows for community facilities on the site, provides only guidance and will have little impact on the delivery of the school.

#### 5. Council assembly:

- Welcomes the proposed rebuild of Elephant and Castle shopping centre and welcomes that this administration is delivering on the Elephant and Castle regeneration after years of dither and delay under the previous Liberal Democrat administration.
- Welcomes the council's commitment and vision for the area and work that is already going on to deliver this.
- Notes that the council is not the owner or landlord of the shopping centre, however calls on the cabinet to work with key landlords such as Delancy, Lend Lease and Network Rail to draw up a retail strategy for the Elephant & Castle, Walworth Road and East Street which protects the vibrant mix of businesses in the area and allows local businesses meaningful involvement in plans for the area.
- Welcomes the recommendation to the cabinet member for communities and economic wellbeing to allocate £22,000 from the first round of The High Street Challenge to the Latin Elephant group to fund business planning, which is the first step of realising this administration's vision for creating a Latin American quarter at the Elephant & Castle.

#### 6. Council assembly

- Welcomes this administration's investment of £5.96 million for parks in the Elephant & Castle area, including Dickens Square Park in Chaucer ward (£1.5m), Pullens Open Space in Newington (£350k), St Mary's Churchyard in Cathedrals (£1.25m) and Nursery Row Park (£600k) and Victory Park (£1.8m) in East Walworth, through the capital refresh programme.
- Notes that as a result of cabinet's decision of 18 March, consultation with residents on proposals to revitalise Dicken's Square Park will proceed with all due haste.
- Welcomes the proposals developed by this administration to revitalise Dicken's Square Park, which will include tree planting, sightline and accessibility improvements, new footpaths, new green space as well as new links to other green space, and improved recreational and play-space.

#### 7. Council assembly:

- Recognises the concerns of residents in South Bermondsey about the need for good quality affordable housing in the area, and in particular family-sized council homes, and welcomes this administration's commitment to delivering 11,000 new council homes in Southwark – the biggest house building programme in the country.
- Condemns the Liberal Democrats for falsely accusing Labour of a “mass sell-off of council homes”, when the number of council homes sold or

demolished under the current Labour administration is actually four times less than the amount in previous years under the Liberal Democrats.

- Condemns Liberal Democrat councillors in South Bermonsey for spreading misleading information about the sale of council homes in the area, and in particular for telling local residents that a property on Longley Street is being sold by the council, when the council is in fact renovating the property to let to council tenants as a family home.

8. Council assembly:

- Welcomes this administration's investment of £326 million to make every council home in Southwark warm, dry and safe.
- Welcomes Southwark Labour's commitment to deliver quality kitchens and bathrooms for every council tenant, including residents on the Arnold Estate.
- Condemns the attempt by Liberal Democrat councillors to ignore need across the borough by prioritising particular council properties in wards they currently hold rather than where the need in the borough is greatest.
- Notes the failure of the Liberal Democrat/Tory council to deliver improvements in housing where they left a housing department judged as failing and a £600m hole in the housing budget.
- Calls on cabinet to guarantee that every council home in Southwark will be made warm, dry and safe and to install new kitchens and bathrooms where they are needed for all council tenants in every ward in the borough.

9. Council assembly:

- Recognises the pressure on school places across the borough, including in Rotherhithe.
- Notes that Liberal Democrats in Rotherhithe have failed to raise this important issue with cabinet.
- Praises local residents who have pressed for a new primary and a new secondary school in the area.
- Welcomes Labour's commitment to new schools in the borough to meet demand.

10. Council assembly:

- Notes that traffic management in the very busy London Bridge is continually being reviewed by highways engineers and network planners, all part of Southwark Council's public realm department.
- Notes that councillors who are concerned about traffic movements should in the first instance contact the public realm division or the relevant cabinet member.
- Notes that the timescale to conduct a full traffic management study for streets in Grange Ward has passed, and regrets that Grange ward councillors have thus far failed to raise concerns about traffic problems in the ward.
- Calls on the cabinet to actively follow up any requests from future Grange ward councillors who wish to call for a traffic study in selected roads.

11. Council assembly:

- Notes that payments negotiated from developers in-lieu of on-site affordable homes are being spent within the communities affected by the new development and are helping to fund 1,000 new council homes, including 165 council homes in SE1 and 76 council homes in SE16.
- Calls on cabinet to work with local ward councillors across the borough to identify sites that could be used to deliver more affordable housing.

12. Council assembly:

- Notes that due to savage cuts to government funding the council has to make savings wherever possible, including the cost of committee meetings.
- Notes that planning committee meetings are currently held in Tooley Street and at Queens Road, Peckham, because of the significant cost implications of holding these meetings elsewhere.
- Calls on the cabinet to hold planning committee meetings in locations across the borough whenever it is financially feasible to do so.

13. In addition council assembly calls on the cabinet to continue delivering a fairer future for all by:

- Creating a new world class civic centre in Walworth.
- Delivering £11million investment in Camberwell Green including a new state of the art library and keep campaigning to extend the Bakerloo Line.
- Securing the long term future of Greendale.
- Campaigning to ensure a Dulwich police base remains open on Seeley Drive on the Kingswood Estate.
- Continuing improvements in Nunhead including a free cash point and a bigger and better playground in Peckham Rye Park.
- Working with the community to transform Peckham town centre including support for local arts organisations and businesses.
- Working with businesses to deliver a business improvement district on Southwark Park Road at The Blue.
- Continuing to campaign with Bermondsey residents to stop the super-sewer at Chambers Wharf.
- Restoring the Old Kent Road to its former glory with plans to build new homes and support for businesses.
- Transforming the Elephant and Castle with a new leisure centre, affordable homes and shopping centre.

**NOTE:** If Revised Amendment G is carried Amendments H to Q will fall.

**AMENDMENTS****REVISED AMENDMENT R**

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**ITEM 5.2 – MEMBERS’ MOTIONS: MOTION 2 – FREE SCHOOL MEALS** (see pages 16  
- 17 of the main agenda)

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**REVISED AMENDMENT R**

**Moved:** Councillor Nick Stanton

**Seconded:** Councillor Anood Al-Samerai

**Delete** all and **insert:**

Council assembly:

1. Welcomes the announcement by Nick Clegg last Autumn that the coalition will be funding free school meals for 4-7 year olds from September, a policy which will provide Southwark with around £1.5 million in extra government funding that it was not previously expecting.
2. Notes that, given Southwark already offers universal free school meals in primary schools, concerns about implementation of the policy nationally will not affect the borough in any way and are not relevant to council business in Southwark.
3. Believes that instead of worrying about how other boroughs will implement the policy, cabinet members in Southwark should be thanking Mr Clegg and his Liberal Democrat colleagues in parliament for freeing up council cash which can be used for other services in the borough.
4. Therefore calls on cabinet to write to Nick Clegg thanking him for the extra funding.