



Cabinet

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Cabinet held on Tuesday 16 September 2025 at 11.00 am at the Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Sarah King (Chair)
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor John Batteson
Councillor Stephanie Cryan
Councillor Helen Dennis
Councillor Natasha Ennin
Councillor Portia Mwangangye
Councillor Michael Situ

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Evelyn Akoto and James McAsh.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

None.

3. NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN A CLOSED MEETING, AND ANY REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

No representations were received.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

6. DEPUTATION REQUESTS

There were no deputation requests.

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress that Southwark has made in tackling the climate emergency over the last financial year, as detailed within the climate change annual report be noted.
2. That the merged climate change strategy (2021) and climate resilience and adaptation strategy (2024) to create a single climate change strategy, and an updated climate action plan that focuses on reducing emissions, improving climate adaptation and resilience, and aligns with the goals and principles of the Southwark 2030 strategy be approved.
3. That the priorities for the next twelve months and the collaborative work underway to implement actions that will adapt the borough and make it more resilient to the worsening effects of climate change be noted.
4. That the substantial new investment secured by officers to support the retrofitting of the council leisure centres, homes and schools be welcomed, but it be noted that the still significant cost of addressing climate change, and the lack of available funding and resources to reduce carbon emissions and deliver climate adaptation measures to protect the borough.

9. TAKING FORWARD THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

RESOLVED:

1. That the findings of the community safety review set out in the report be

noted.

2. That the council's new service model for community safety and phased delivery plan be agreed.
3. That the progress already made be noted, including hotspot activity, expanded community warden's powers and operational improvements.

10. RESIDENT EXPERIENCE PLAN 2025-2030

RESOLVED:

1. That the resident experience plan 2025 – 2030 (REP) (Appendix 1 of the report), the REP action plan (Appendix 2 of the report), be approved and that the equalities impact and needs analysis (Appendix 3 of the report) and executive summary from Thinks Insight & Strategy (Appendix 4 of the report) be noted.
2. That the actions and priorities arising from the resident experience plan be agreed.

11. ALLOCATIONS FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING

RESOLVED:

That the allocation of strategic community infrastructure levy funding of up to £2,500,000 to fit out of the Women's Safety Centre be agreed.

12. POLICY AND RESOURCES: CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2025-26 AND SOUTHWARK 2030 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

RESOLVED:

1. That the month 4 2025-26 forecast spend and resources and future years for both the general fund and housing investment programmes as detailed in Appendices A1 and C of the report be noted.
2. That the alignment of the general fund capital programme to the Southwark 2030 priorities at Appendix A2 of the report be noted.
3. That the significant borrowing requirement of £321m which needs to be identified for the general fund programme to be fully delivered over the remaining term of the programme, as detailed in Appendix A of the report be noted.

4. That the significant borrowing requirement of £359m for the housing investment programme to be fully delivered over the remaining term of the programme, as detailed in Appendix C of the report be noted.
5. That the virements and variations to the general fund and housing investment capital programme as detailed in Appendix D of the report be approved.

13. POLICY AND RESOURCES: REVENUE MONITORING REPORT 2025-26

RESOLVED:

1. That the housing revenue account (HRA) forecast of an adverse variance of £10.1m be noted.
2. That the adverse variance of £24.2m forecast for the general fund (GF) in 2025-26 be noted.
3. That the key adverse variations and budget pressures and mitigating actions underlying the position be noted:
 - Housing revenue account (paragraphs 13-26 of the report)
 - General fund (paragraphs 26-82 of the report)
 - Demand pressures in temporary accommodation (TA) (housing)
 - Increased demand in adult's and children's social care (children's and adult's).
4. That the update on the 2025-26 and 2026-27 departmental savings and transformational savings (paragraph 83-85 of the report) be noted.
5. That the dedicated schools grant (DSG) in-year favourable variance of £0.075m be noted.

14. CASH INCENTIVE SCHEME (HOME PURCHASE GRANT) AMENDMENT TO POLICY

RESOLVED

1. That the changes to the home purchase grant, cash incentive policy for the inclusion of the purchase of one-bedroom properties in the scheme be approved.
2. That the amount of grant offered per property be increased, ensuring that the home purchase grant remains an attractive option to assist tenants to move into homeownership, whilst retaining council housing stock for much needed future use.
3. That the consecutive removal of the £3000 grant payment made to tenants

for additional property features which simplifies and standardises the approach to grant assessments be approved.

15. RESPONSE TO THE EDUCATION AND LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMISSION: REVIEW OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE PLAN (EHCP), SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) PROVISIONS AND INCLUSIONS IN SCHOOLS

RESOLVED:

That the responses to the education and local economy scrutiny commission recommendations on the review of education and health care plan (EHCP), special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provisions and inclusions in schools be approved.

16. RESPONSE TO HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE DRAFT RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

RESOLVED:

That all recommendations made by housing scrutiny commission as set out in the report be accepted.

17. RESPONSE TO THE EDUCATION AND LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMISSION: REVIEW OF THE DRAFT TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN, YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT AND EAST STREET TRADERS

RESOLVED:

That the responses to the education and local economy scrutiny commission recommendations on the review of the draft town centre action plans, youth employment support and East Street Traders be approved.

18. RESPONSE TO THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMISSION: NURSING CARE HOME DELIVERY SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT

RESOLVED:

1. That the health and social care scrutiny commission (HSCSC) be thanked for its work on the nursing care home delivery scrutiny review report.
2. That the officer response to the recommendations within the nursing care home delivery scrutiny review report, as set out in the 'key issues for consideration' section of this report be approved.

19. REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION 2024/25: EXPLORING THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPACTS OF ACTIVE TRAVEL AND ACCESS TO NATURE SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommendations of the former environment scrutiny commission 2024-25: exploring the physical and mental health and wellbeing impacts of active travel and access to nature scrutiny review report, as set out on pages 24 -31 of the report be noted.
2. That the recommendations from the commission be considered and that the relevant cabinet member reports back to cabinet on the recommendations.

20. REPORT OF THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION: OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW OF THE CANADA ESTATE 2017/18, FAIR STREET / DEVON MANSIONS 2018/19 AND KIRBY ESTATE 2018/19 QHIP MAJOR WORKS PROJECTS

Councillor Ian Wingfield, chair of the overview and scrutiny committee presented a summary of the key findings and issues arising from the housing scrutiny commission report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommendations from the housing scrutiny commission arising from the review of major works in relation to Canada Estate 2017/18 QHIP, Fair Street / Devon Mansions 2018/19 QHIP and Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP as set out at paragraphs 8 to 19 of the report be noted.
2. That the recommendations from the commission be considered and that the relevant cabinet member report back to cabinet on the recommendations within eight weeks.

21. GATEWAY 1: PROCUREMENT STRATEGY APPROVAL: PROVISION OF LEARNING DISABILITY SUPPORTED LIVING SERVICES

RESOLVED:

1. That the procurement strategy outlined in the report for the provision of learning disability supported living services at an estimated annual cost of approximately £12.7m and at an estimated total maximum cost of approximately £89.2m for a period of three (3) years plus two two-year extensions (three + two + two) noting that this is an estimated cost based on

potential maximum costs and may be subject to inflationary increases prior to the anticipated contract start in February 2027 be approved and that the contract values through the life of the contract will be subject to annual inflationary negotiations which will affect the estimated maximum contract value and that the contract value will be split across multiple contracts as detailed in the body of the report.

2. That the decision to award the gateway 2 report be delegated to the strategic director of children and adult services in consultation with the cabinet member for health and wellbeing.

22. GATEWAY 1: PROCUREMENT APPROACH FOR HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT SEND VEHICLES FRAMEWORK

RESOLVED:

1. That the procurement strategy for the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) vehicles framework as outlined within the report at an estimated annual value of £3.2m and cumulative eight-year lifetime contract total value of £25.6m, provisionally scheduled to commence on 12 March 2026 be approved, noting that award of the framework does not commit the council to any expenditure.
2. That the delegation of the gateway 2 contract award recommendations for SEND vehicles framework be approved to the strategic director of children and adult services, in consultation with the deputy leader and cabinet member for children, education and refugees.

23. AUTHORISATION OF DEBT WRITE-OFFS OVER £50,000 AND UP TO £250,000 FOR COMMERCIAL RENT DEBT

RESOLVED:

That the write off of £659,432.56 for 5 debts be approved.

24. MOTIONS FROM COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

RESOLVED:

Keeping Southwark Safe: Fighting crime and the causes of crime

That the motion referred from council assembly as a recommendation to cabinet, set out below be agreed.

1. Council Assembly notes:

- a. That tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is a top priority for many of our residents.
- b. The council's commitment to making Southwark safer for all.
- c. The council's continued ambitions to work collaboratively with local communities to identify key concerns, target action in hotspot areas, including on our streets and our estates, work to restore trust and confidence in the police, and to invest in prevention.
- d. This Labour government's commitment to 13,000 extra neighbourhood police, visible on the beat, cracking down on anti-social behaviour, and a named, contactable officer in every community.
- e. On protecting our public spaces:
 - i. The upcoming rollout of new nighttime wardens following a £450,000 investment in Southwark Labour's budget amendment this year, with new officers patrolling streets and estates from 6pm to 2am.
 - ii. The powers to be given to wardens to carry out enforcement, with training from the police allowing them to address and prevent anti-social behaviour.
 - iii. The launch of the council's £2m Anti-Social Behaviour Task Force, with 100 officers recruited to work on tackling crime and antisocial behaviour.
 - iv. The pilots to improve safety in our parks developed with friends of parks, the wider community, the metropolitan police service and council to monitor impact of efforts to deter anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime in a named park.
 - v. The £3 million investment in upgrading existing CCTV across our borough.
 - vi. The upgrading of over 2,800 street lights since 2022, and ambitions to upgrade all our street lights by 2026, which are on track.
 - vii. The Home Secretary's initiative to keep streets safe this summer, with new local ASB Action Plans and a Summer Surge Delivery Plans.
 - viii. The Council's enforcement cracking down on fly-tipping, with fees increased from £400 to £1,000 and new powers from the Labour

government for the police to identify, seize and crush vehicles of waste criminals.

- f. On working to improve public trust in the police:
 - i. The successful launch of the Southwark Policing Oversight Board, the first of its kind in London, which puts residents at the heart of improving public trust and confidence in the Metropolitan Police by increasing accountability and transparency and allowing residents to share their concerns.
 - ii. This council's initiative to bring young people in to advise on Stop and Search, helping to train over 100 police officers to meet the highest standards.
 - iii. This Labour government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, which includes measures that will put named and contactable officers back in our neighbourhoods, with a 50% increase in community police officers by 2029.
- g. Local councillors are fighting to save a police hub in Rotherhithe:
 - i. That despite this guarantee, Bermondsey Safer Neighbourhood Teams have vacated their base at Seven Islands Leisure Centre.
 - ii. That the council alongside British Land have offered the Borough Commander several potential sites for a dedicated police hub.
 - iii. That all of these sites have been declined by the Borough Commander.
 - iv. That the Safer Neighbourhood Teams are now based at Southwark Police Station which is further than the Met Police's commitment of no more than twenty minute journey for local based policing.
 - v. Further notes the work of the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Neighbourhoods and the Rotherhithe Ward councillors in lobbying the Assistant Commissioner of the Met Police and the Borough Commander to actively engage in finding a suitable location for a police hub.
 - vi. The petition set up by the Rotherhithe Ward councillors that has gained local support.
- h. Tackling violence against women and girls:
 - i. Southwark now has 20 Safe Havens and 58 Safe Spaces where

any resident who feels unsafe, particularly women, can drop in for support and advice.

- ii. The council's 'Through Her Eyes' campaign has been shown in over 1,000 schools, and garnered over 1 million views across various social media platforms, raising awareness amongst men and boys to change their attitudes towards women and girls.
- iii. This council has dedicated resources to extend work being done to improve women's safety at night – with £150,000 for training, spiking kits, and accelerating the rates of signups to the Women's Nighttime Safety Charter.
- iv. The government's Crime and Policing Bill, when introduced, will criminalise the taking or recording of intimate images or videos without consent.

i. Notes and supports Women's Aid's Motion for Change: Together against violence towards women and girls (VAWG):

- i. Welcoming Labour's commitment to halve VAWG in the next decade.
- ii. Noting that Labour's bold ambition cannot be realised by national government alone - we need action from local councillors, council leaders and Police and Crime Commissioners to turn the tide on VAWG in our local communities.
- iii. Agrees that VAWG services should meet the needs of all survivors, including the most marginalised survivors.

j. Resident engagement in hotspot areas:

- i. During national ASB awareness week, with the council and partners holding a range of events to encourage reporting and to highlight support available to victims and witnesses of ASB and crime.
- ii. With upcoming town centre engagement days to be held in Camberwell, Elephant and Castle, Rye Lane and Borough High Street, with information stalls included materials on town centre action plans, business crime prevention, reporting and opportunity to meet community wardens and local police officers.
- iii. The six days of action in Elephant and Castle, which included robbery and VAWG operations to deter phone snatches and to promote and increase signups to the London nighttime women's safety charter.

- iv. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Neighbourhoods, Councillor Natasha Ennin, has been regularly visiting hotspot areas, listening to residents, identifying key issues and acting to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour.
- k. Prevention:
 - i. Welcomes the government's announcement that rough sleeping will be decriminalised for the first time since the Vagrancy Act 1824, to which Emma Haddad, Chief Executive of St Mungo's, said: "*The repeal of the Vagrancy Act, which criminalises rough sleeping, cannot come soon enough... The answer is not to criminalise people for living on the streets but instead to focus on tackling the health, housing and wider societal issues that are causing homelessness in the first place.*"
 - ii. The appointment of a new Rough Sleeper Coordinator to help progress toward the council's ambitions to end rough sleeping.
 - iii. Increasing youth engagement, with street-based outreach from youth advisors on healthy relationships and offers of youth activities across the borough, to act as diversion to young people at early risk of committing ASB or crime during the summer holidays. This work is supported by our Southwark Violence Reduction Unit in partnership with our local My Endz provider Active Communities Network.
 - iv. New youth engagement days to ensure the youth voice is heard within our residents' neighbourhoods and to encourage reporting in areas that they feel are unsafe, facilitated and supported by local voluntary organisations working with young people in each neighbourhood.
 - v. Council Assembly supports Labour's plans to intervene earlier to stop young people being drawn into crime, creating a new Young Futures programme with a network of hubs reaching every community.

2. This council resolves to:

- a. Take action on the results of the Women's Safety Survey 2025:
 - i. Improve areas in which women have reported feeling unsafe including visual audits of locations of concern to make improvements to the public realm.
 - ii. Hold information sessions across the borough to provide women

- with practical tools to increase feelings of safety at night including, personal safety alarms, anti-spiking kits and torches.
- iii. Improve the council's communications to ensure that women and anyone who feels unsafe in borough knows where safe spaces are to get support.
- b. Explore the possibility of appointing a councillor as a VAWG Champion to ensure council services and actions in preventing violence against women and girls are as comprehensive and effective as possible.
- c. Continue to roll out better lighting and CCTV to make streets, parks and estates safer, to deter crime and continue to help the police catch criminals.
- d. Open a Women's Safety Centre to provide services to support women facing violence and domestic abuse.
- e. Establish safe routes to school for our children and young people, with increased policing, CCTV support and other means to deter crime and protect children.
- f. Help ensure a policing presence is maintained in Rotherhithe by:
 - i. Asking cabinet to work with the GLA Police and Crime Committee and our London Assembly Member, Marina Ahmad, to hold the police to account.
 - ii. Continuing to work with the police to identify a suitable site within 20 minutes' walk of Rotherhithe.
 - iii. Calling on the Borough Commander to be open and transparent about the reasons for refusing space for a temporary police hub.

Southwark welcomes 400th refugee family

That the motion referred from council assembly as a recommendation to cabinet, set out below be agreed.

1. Council Assembly celebrates:
 - a. The council's achievement in resettling the 400th family under the Refugee Resettlement Programme.
 - b. The outstanding contribution of the voluntary and community sector for their continued work in helping sanctuary seekers and refugees to settle in our borough.

- c. The generosity and support of Southwark residents in coming forwards and opening their hearts and homes to refugees.
- d. The efforts of partner organisations and officers in helping to resettle so many families in our borough.
- e. The collective efforts of the council, voluntary and community sector (VCS) and partner organisations in making Southwark a Borough of Sanctuary, welcoming refugees and sanctuary seekers in all walks of life.

2. Council Assembly recognises:

- a. The support provided by the council for 116 children seeking sanctuary since 2022.
- b. The council's work in supporting almost 600 Ukrainian refugees following Russia's invasion in 2022.
- c. The council's work in supporting 50 Afghan refugees as part of the Afghan Resettlement Scheme in addition to the 200 individuals supported in the borough.
- d. The council's support of the Home Office accommodated 574 asylum seekers.
- e. The council's £24.6 million expenditure since 2022 in supporting almost 800 households with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- f. The continued support for the Southwark Law Centre's vital work in supporting sanctuary seekers and refugees.
- g. The support provided to over 650 sanctuary seekers and refugees who found themselves homeless.

3. Council Assembly stands united in:

- a. Welcoming sanctuary seekers and refugees to Southwark.
- b. Doing everything in our power to support those who have fled the most unimaginable of circumstances.
- c. Our belief that our diversity makes our borough stronger, and that our culture, cuisine, community and spirit have been enriched a thousand-fold by citizens and families from all over the world.
- d. The continued belief that sanctuary seekers should be granted the right to work rather than having to wait 12 months or for their application to

be decided, supporting the Lift the Ban coalition.

4. Council Assembly reiterates:

a. Its commitment to the five City of Sanctuary values:

1. Inclusivity: welcoming and respecting people from all backgrounds, placing value on diversity and committing to equality
2. Openness: Committing to a culture of working collaboratively across the City of Sanctuary network and in partnership with other councils
3. Participation: Working with people seeking sanctuary and valuing and recognising the contribution of all. Aspiring to ensure that people seeking sanctuary are involved in all decision making at all levels and are supported to become leaders in the organisation, networks and the wider movement.
4. Inspiring: Working with enthusiasm and positivity and being determined to surpass what has already been achieved to welcome refugees and people seeking sanctuary.
5. Integrity: Aspiring to high standards of honesty and behaviour and always acting in the interests of people seeking sanctuary.

5. Council Assembly notes:

a. The four objectives of the Borough of Sanctuary Action plan:

1. Stand together: We want Southwark to be a place of safety, support and opportunity for those seeking sanctuary and amplify their voices and experiences to shape positive change.
2. Voice: We want to celebrate the culture, diversity and contributions of those seeking sanctuary and amplify their voices and experiences to shape positive change.
3. Shaping Services: We want to better understand the experiences and needs of those seeking sanctuary and ensure that services and local agencies are responding to these issues and enabling opportunities.
4. Bespoke support: We want to foster collaboration between different local agencies so they can respond effectively, cooperatively and flexibly to the ongoing and changing needs of sanctuary-seekers.

6. Council Assembly asks Cabinet to:
 - a. Continue its role in delivering on the Borough of Sanctuary Action Plan to surpass what has already been achieved to welcome refugees and people seeking sanctuary.
 - b. Enable our Borough of Sanctuary team to continue to provide essential wrap around support for refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants.
 - c. Ensure a whole council approach is being taken to support refugees and sanctuary seekers, including helping those who find themselves homeless.
 - d. Publish a report to mark one year of Southwark as a Borough of Sanctuary.
 - e. Reiterate its support for and membership of the Lift the Ban coalition.
 - f. Actively support our sisters and brothers in their annual celebration of refugee week to make Southwark Refugee Week the loudest, most inclusive and celebratory refugee celebrations in the country.

Southwark Stands Against Welfare Cuts

That the motion referred from council assembly as a recommendation to cabinet, set out below be agreed.

1. Council Assembly notes:
 - a. That 3.7 million people in England and Wales currently receive Personal Independence Payments (PIP).
 - b. PIP is a benefit not linked to being in work or out of work, but instead designed to help people with the additional unavoidable costs of having a disability. Many disabled people use PIP to cover the cost of getting to and from work, for paying for essential equipment and for meeting their social care charges.
 - c. That Universal Credit contains a health-related element that currently supports 2.25 million people with severe health problems.
 - d. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation which has found that 50% of recipients of the health element of Universal Credit are either unable to heat their home, are behind on their household bills or have low food security.
 - e. That there are 900,000 children currently living in households where

someone receives the health-related Universal Credit.

2. Council Assembly notes:

- a. The regrettable consequences of austerity on Southwark's most vulnerable residents, instigated by the Conservative - Liberal Democrat collation, which has had deleterious and long-lasting effects on our residents living with disabilities and health conditions, including children. Policies such as the Bedroom Tax and Benefit Cap pushed vulnerable people into poverty and homelessness.
- b. That the previous Labour government took a million children out of poverty and reduced homelessness by more than two-thirds.
- c. That the £22 billion black hole in the public finances left by the Conservative Government has resulted in tough decisions having to be made.
- d. That despite tough decisions, the Labour Party is committed to fixing the broken welfare system, and that tackling poverty and inequality has always been central to the Labour Party's mission.

3. Council Assembly welcomes:

- a. The work of the Southwark Labour administration to provide welfare support to those most in need across our borough:
 - i. We have delivered the country's most comprehensive free healthy school meals programme across our nursery, primary and secondary schools, and in the school holidays. Furthermore, Southwark Labour has led the way nationally, by providing free school meals universally to primary school children since 2013, and by extending free school meal provision in secondary schools with £3.2m of investment for children who need it most.
 - ii. In 2024 alone, the Southwark Cost of Living Support Fund distributed more than £40 million to families in immediate need. Since the start of the Cost of Living Crisis in 2021, the Council has reached over 100,000 Southwark residents, those on the lowest incomes and most vulnerable to the impacts of rising costs.
 - iii. Offering a package of cost-of-living support that includes help for residents on low or insecure incomes and dealing with problem debt
 - iv. The Holiday Food and Fun programme funded nearly 70,000 free meals for children aged 4-6 in 2024
 - v. The distribution of Rose Vouchers, to help families buy fresh fruit and vegetables
 - vi. The Pension Credit take-up campaign, which supported eligible residents in applying for Pension Credit, enabling them to benefit from the Winter Fuel Allowance

- vii. The Southwark Energy Savers Scheme, which provides energy-saving advice and support to residents struggling with rising energy bills and the cost of living crisis.

b. The role that Labour MPs have played:

- i. Voting for the amended Welfare Reform Bill, recognising the impact that the original bill would've had on those claiming PIP
- ii. The work done by MPs Florence Eshalomi and Helen Hayes, in scrutinising the government's welfare plans and securing changes, so that no one currently in receipt of the health top-up of universal credit, will lose out.

c. The proposed Timms Review to examine eligibility for PIP, and the changes now secured around the implementation timetable to take account of that review which will be co-produced with disabled people.

4. Council Assembly recognises:

- a. That the Labour government inherited a mess from the Tories but that over the last year, important steps have been taken to invest in the NHS and get waiting lists down and put money back in people's pockets through a significant increase in the national minimum wage.
- b. That the current welfare system needs a thorough review, to take account of emerging health challenges, address high levels of worklessness amongst young people, and to tackle child poverty and homelessness.
- c. That the government has committed to investing £1bn in vital back to work support;
- d. That despite this, there have been significant concerns raised by disabled people and anti-poverty organisations about proposals that were put forward around PIP eligibility, and the health-related top-up to Universal Credit.

5. Council Assembly resolves to:

- a. Ask that the Council continues to provide support to residents who need it most:
 - i. Continuing to provide Short Breaks to children with SEND through the Thrive-to-25 programme
 - ii. Continuing to lend a helping hand to families during school holidays in providing free healthy meals through initiatives such as Holiday Food and Fun
 - iii. Continue to provide free healthy school meals in nursery, primary and secondary schools, including the Department of Education's

- iv. pilot free breakfast clubs currently running in some Southwark primary schools
 - iv. Continuing to provide financial assistance to those receiving domiciliary care
- b. To write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, to set out our priorities for Welfare Reform, including the abolition of the two-child limit in Universal Credit and permanent re-pegging of the Local Housing Allowance.
- c. To engage with the Timms Review and ensure that the voices and experiences of disabled Southwark residents are heard in that process

Making Space for Girls in Parks and Open Spaces

That the motion referred from council assembly as a recommendation to cabinet, set out below be agreed.

1. This Council notes:
 - a. This Labour administration's continued investment in parks, green spaces, and leisure facilities, including:
 - i. Having 30 Green Flag parks and an extensive parks and playground investment and improvements programme that has delivered major upgrades the length and breadth of the borough.
 - ii. A borough-wide plan to tackle safety and antisocial behaviour in parks.
 - iii. Upgrades to outdoor gyms and sports facilities.
 - iv. Initiatives such as the creation of more community growing spaces and the borough-wide action plan for Right to Grow so that our green spaces can meet the leisure needs of even more of our residents.
2. This Council also notes:
 - a. That despite these positive developments, there is compelling evidence from the Make Space for Girls campaign showing that teenage girls continue to feel excluded from parks and open spaces.
 - b. That the provision of multi-use green areas (MUGAs), skateparks and other facilities tends to cater to boys, and does not reflect the social needs of girls.
 - c. That often facilities such as outdoor gyms are designed with equipment that can be daunting or inaccessible to female users and particularly teenage girls.
 - d. That the work concerning our green and open spaces, while extensive,

does not yet include specific design standards or data monitoring to ensure teenage girls are equitably served.

- e. That research from Women in Sport indicates that teenage girls are almost twice as likely than teenage boys to disengage from sport during adolescence. Primary reasons for this include fear of judgement, a lack of confidence and not feeling safe outdoors.
- f. That exercise has significant physical but also mental health benefits and can support young people with improved social and emotional resilience.

3. This Council believes:

- a. That all young people deserve green and public spaces where they feel welcome, safe and seen – and that girls and young women must be part of shaping the parks, playgrounds, sports facilities and outdoor spaces that serve them.
- b. That we have an opportunity to build on Southwark's leadership in public space investment by becoming a national leader in designing spaces for teenage girls and young women.

4. This Council resolves to:

- a. **Include a gender-inclusion strand** in the new Green Spaces Plan, specifically focused on teenage girls' use of parks and green spaces, and informed by the research and guidance from Make Space for Girls.
- b. **Undertake an audit** of a representative sample of Southwark's parks and play areas by Autumn 2026 to assess current usage, inclusion, and accessibility for teenage girls and other underrepresented groups.
- c. **Engage girls and young women** across the borough – including through schools, youth groups and other community partners – to understand what facilities, layouts and activities would make public spaces work for them.
- d. **Deliver at least three co-designed pilot interventions** in parks or green spaces or new public realm by Summer 2027. These will be pilots within existing capital projects. The pilots will look to include some of features known to support the use of spaces by girls and young women such as:
 - i. **Social Seating Arrangements:** Designing seating in clusters or circles facilitates social interaction, allowing girls to gather comfortably without feeling isolated or exposed.
 - ii. **Subdivided and Open Sports Areas:** Instead of large, enclosed multi-use games areas (MUGAs), creating smaller, open courts

- iii. can prevent domination by single groups and make the spaces more inviting for all users, including girls.
- iv. **Inclusion of Swings and Natural Play Elements:** Incorporating swings and natural play features like logs or climbing structures can cater to varied interests and promote active engagement among girls.
- iv. **Accessible and Quality Toilets:** Providing clean and well-maintained toilets can remove barriers to access and comfort for girls. 78% of girls say they avoid sport during menstruation.
- v. **Circular Pathways:** Designing circular paths around parks encourages movement and can be particularly appealing for walking and socialising, activities often preferred by teenage girls.

Above all, these pilots should actively involve teenage girls in the design process to ensure that their specific needs and preferences are addressed, leading to more inclusive spaces.

- e. Build on these pilot interventions by then **embedding girl-inclusive principles** in all future park and playground refurbishments.
- f. **Join the Make Space for Girls local authority network**, working collaboratively to share learning and push national standards forward.
- g. **Publish an update report** alongside the pilot projects delivery, and ensure equalities reporting, with data broken down by sex and age, is regularly reviewed by Cabinet.

Implementation of a Tourist Tax

That the motion referred from council assembly as a recommendation to cabinet, set out below be agreed.

1. Council Assembly notes:
 - a. That millions of people visit Southwark every year, with the Imperial War Museum receiving over 1 million tourists annually and Borough Market attracting 500,000 visitors every week.
 - b. That visitors to Southwark, whilst significantly contributing to the local economy, place additional strain on infrastructure, public services, and the local environment.
 - c. That many cities, such as Venice and Amsterdam, successfully employ a tourist contribution scheme (colloquially known as a tourist tax) to offset these impacts, without deterring visitors to the local economy.
 - d. That several cities in the UK have now implemented, or are in the process of implementing their own tourist tax, including Manchester,

York, Liverpool, and Edinburgh, with the latter two having just implemented the tax in May 2025.

- e. Manchester City Council reportedly made £2.8 million from their tourist tax, whilst Edinburgh expects to bring in as much as £50 million per year.
- f. The recent support for a tourist tax from the Mayor of London.
- g. That a tourist tax could provide additional revenue for maintaining public spaces, public transport, heritage conservation, waste management, sustainability projects, supporting the borough's long-term goals and for promoting Southwark.

2. Council Assembly believes:

- a. Welcome though visitors are, a tourist tax would allow Southwark to ensure visitors contribute fairly to the borough's upkeep and to its sustainability, and to better manage the pressures that mass tourism brings.
- b. Evidence from numerous cities shows a modest visitor levy would not deter tourists and is now an accepted contribution across Europe to the costs of maintaining and enhancing popular visitor destinations.
- c. A London-wide tourist tax could, by some estimates, potentially generate hundreds of millions of pounds in revenue for the capital

3. Council Assembly resolves to:

- a. Utilise our strong relationships with Business Improvement Districts in order to understand the potential impact of a tourism levy on businesses, particularly those in the hospitality sector.
- b. Support the call to implement a London-wide tourism levy through accommodation costs.

Limiting the spread of damaging gambling premises in the Blue

That the motion referred from council assembly as a recommendation to cabinet, set out below be agreed.

1. Council Assembly:

- a. Notes the successes of the Blue Lettings Strategy, established with the support of local councillors, Blue Bermondsey business improvement district (BID) and the council over the past decade, that has seen:

- i. Major public realm improvements
 - ii. Market infrastructure upgrades
 - iii. Shopfront improvements
 - iv. Four new restaurants set up on the high street
 - v. New locally owned uses such Brotherhood of Games thriving and bringing footfall and vitality
 - vi. The upcoming launch of the new B223 Multi-arts centre and community centre in the Thorowgoods building
 - vii. New affordable workspace supported to be established in the arches.
- b. Notes that more needs to be done to drive footfall and improved mix of shops and stalls, creating new jobs as well as progression for local entrepreneurs, especially with the growing population (as well as retail competition) deriving from the new development at the Biscuit factory.
- c. Notes the growing prevalence of Adult Gaming Centres in the borough and nationally, and recent research showing their propensity to target areas of higher deprivation, and findings from addiction experts showing a spike in clinical referrals for gambling addicts.
- d. Notes that the Blue currently has an over-concentration of five gambling premises along a 150 yard stretch, in units that could do more to support the local economy, and less to fuelling addiction and financial distress.
- e. Calls on the council assembly to restate its commitment to the Blue lettings strategy, working with private commercial landlords and the Blue Bermondsey BID, to curate the high street and prioritise marketing and letting of commercial premises that:
 - i. Bring pride &/or distinction to the area
 - ii. Are independent businesses
 - iii. Avoid duplication
 - iv. Introduce uses that meet the needs of different incomes and backgrounds in the community
 - v. Drive footfall
 - vi. Generate local jobs and promotes skills development opportunities
 - vii. Support progression for locally owned businesses
 - viii. Avoid known public health risks.
- f. Calls on the council to re-commit to the Blue lettings strategy covering the above principles, and to use every available lever to avoid turning over leases of existing betting shops within its property portfolio in deprived or over-saturated areas.
- g. Calls on the Leader and Cabinet Member for Business to organise a meeting with local ward councillors, Blue Bermondsey BID and other

stakeholders to support the strategy for improving the Blue, and long-term prospects for commercial property portfolio.

- h. Calls on the council to explore options for strengthening planning policy to combat over-concentration of gambling premises, through its forthcoming review of the Southwark Plan.
- i. Calls on the council to commission independent field research with local health charities and research organisations, to better understand the spending profiles and psychological backgrounds of repeat customers of gambling shops at the Blue, and to publicise those findings on its website.

25. APPOINTMENT TO LONDON COUNCILS TRANSPORT ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (S101 JOINT COMMITTEE) / JPP PANEL / SOUTHWARK TENANT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION COMMITTEE 2025-26

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments for the remainder of the 2025-26 municipal year as set out be agreed:

- London Councils Transport and Environment Committee (S101 Joint Committee) – **Councillor James McAsh**
- Joint Partnership Panel (JPP) – **Councillor Sarah King** and
- Southwark Tenant Management Organisation Committee – **Councillor Michael Situ**.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the access to information procedure rules of the Southwark Constitution.

The following is a summary of the decisions taken in the closed part of the meeting.

26. MINUTES

The closed minutes of the cabinet meeting held on 7 July 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

27. GATEWAY 1 - PROCUREMENT STRATEGY APPROVAL: PROVISION OF LEARNING DISABILITY SUPPORTED LIVING SERVICES

The cabinet considered the closed information relating to this item. Please see item 21 for the decision.

28. AUTHORISATION OF DEBT WRITE-OFFS OVER £50,000 AND UP TO £250,000 FOR COMMERCIAL RENT DEBT

The cabinet considered the closed information relating to this item. Please see item 23 for the decision.

The meeting ended at 1.10pm

CHAIR:

DATED:

DEADLINE FOR NOTIFICATION OF CALL-IN UNDER SECTION 17 OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES IS MIDNIGHT, WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2025.

THE ABOVE DECISIONS WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTABLE UNTIL AFTER THAT DATE. SHOULD A DECISION OF THE CABINET BE CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY, THEN THE RELEVANT DECISION WILL BE HELD IN ABEYANCE PENDING THE OUTCOME OF SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION.