



## **CABINET**

MINUTES of the Cabinet held on Monday 2 February 2026 at 3.00 pm at Ground floor meeting rooms, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Sarah King (Chair)  
Councillor Jasmine Ali  
Councillor Evelyn Akoto  
Councillor John Batteson  
Councillor Stephanie Cryan  
Councillor Ellie Cumbo  
Councillor Helen Dennis  
Councillor Natasha Ennin  
Councillor James McAsh  
Councillor Portia Mwangangye

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

No representations were received.

**2. APOLOGIES**

All members were present.

**3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

The following items were identified as late and urgent item which the chair agreed to accept:

- Item 10: Policy and resources strategy report: medium term financial strategy update and 2026-27 general fund budget proposals  
Item 11: Better repairs: repairs modernisation.

Reasons for lateness and urgency were included in the reports.

#### 4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

#### 5. MINUTES

##### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

#### 6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

##### 1. Question from Toni Parker

Residents across London and the Social Housing Action Campaign (SHAC) are holding housing associations accountable for the unreasonable, and potentially dangerous, lack of service we receive, along with the escalating costs of rents and service charge. What can the council do to support our challenge, particularly in Monmouth Court, Southwark?

##### **Response from Councillor Portia Mwangangye, Cabinet Member for Council Homes**

We want to ensure that all residents in the borough, regardless of their tenure, have the highest quality of life possible. Going forward, the council will be undertaking regular engagement with the largest housing associations in the borough to address the biggest challenges that our residents are facing. We are also hosting a scrutiny session this Wednesday 5 February regarding the council's work in supporting housing associations, with a particular focus on meeting regulatory standards, housing repairs, anti-social behaviour on estates, and waste management and cleaning of the public realm.

Despite this work, the council does not have direct regulatory oversight of housing associations. Housing associations operating as registered social landlords are in the first instance regulated through their own internal complaints procedure and the Housing Ombudsman for individual tenant issues.

For more systemic issues affecting many tenants such as major safety concerns or governance failures, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) is the body that oversees housing associations and can take enforcement action as necessary. We suggest that the resident/s contact the RSH concerning the problems they have outlined.

Although we cannot intervene directly in the regulation of housing associations, we are always willing to listen, help signpost, and support residents in understanding the best avenues for action. If you or other residents of Monmouth Court would like further guidance on how to engage with the RSH or the Ombudsman, we are happy to assist.

## **2. Question from Arti Dillon**

Will the cabinet utilise Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) powers to secure 2,000+ empty properties locally and end the 149-day re-let delay with a 60-day mandate? The generated revenue could fund a freeze on rents, service charges, and council tax to stop further community displacement and reduce poverty?

### **Response from Councillor Helen Dennis, New Homes and Sustainable Development**

We recognise the importance of making the best use of Southwark's housing stock, and our comprehensive empty homes action plan addresses issues in both the private sector and for council-owned homes, ensuring we use all powers available to us.

Of the estimated 5,200 empty homes across the borough, the majority are in the private sector. The council already targets these homes using council tax premiums and the use of grants and loans to bring them back in to use where possible. A total of £191,740 has been allocated for empty property grants, and £1,097,840 is available this financial year to support empty homes through loan funding. We have also already allocated £2m of capital funding to a rolling CPO Fund for the compulsory purchase of long-term empty homes, with 2 cases currently progressing.

Empty council homes form part of the overall empty homes figure. As one of the largest council landlords in the country, the authority has disproportionately more empty council homes, with just over 2,000 currently empty. Of these, 1,200 cannot be relet, including around 1,000 in major regeneration schemes such as Aylesbury and Tustin, which are due for demolition. At any time, approximately 2% of council homes are empty and actively being worked on.

CPOs and EDMOs apply only to private sector dwellings and therefore cannot be used in relation to empty council homes. However, a series of strategic improvements are already underway to reduce turnaround times, including stronger management oversight, improved contractor management, increased contracting capacity, the introduction of additional contractors, an expansion of in-house delivery, and simplifying the void delivery model to provide clearer accountability.

## **7. DEPUTATION REQUESTS**

The report had not been circulated five clear days in advance of the meeting. The chair agreed to accept this item as urgent.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the deputation request from local residents in respect of the Better Repairs plan report on the agenda be heard.
2. A spokesperson for the deputation addressed cabinet for five minutes and questions were asked of the deputation for a period of five minutes.

## **8. OLDER PEOPLE'S HOUSING STRATEGY 2026 - 2036**

Cabinet placed on record thanks to Councillor Sam Dalton, the deputy cabinet member for supported housing. They thanked Councillor Sam Dalton for his leadership on this work and commitment and drive that have been central to shaping the strategy and to strengthening the support offered to older residents across the borough.

Cabinet also heard representations from Steve Lancashire, chair of age friendly group and convenor of Southwark Pensioners Action group.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the council's new older people's housing strategy for 2026 – 2036 be approved.

## **9. NEW JAMES COURT, SCYLLA ROAD – PROPOSED COMMUNITY-LED HOUSING**

Cabinet heard representations from the Scylla Road community steering group.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the progress to date in bringing forward a pilot scheme for community-led homes at a site in Peckham, including the selection of London Community Land Trust ("CLT") as the preferred delivery partner, following a competitive selection process carried out in November 2024 – February 2025 be noted.
2. That an in-principal disposal of land at New James Court, Scylla Road, as shown at Appendix 1 to the report, to London Community Land Trust for the

delivery of new community-led affordable homes be approved.

3. That authority be delegated to the director of planning and growth to approve detailed contractual terms for the proposed disposal, in line with the key terms set out within the report.

## **10. POLICY AND RESOURCES STRATEGY REPORT: 2026-27 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

It was not possible to circulate this report five clear days in advance of the meeting. Urgent consideration was required to prepare a budget proposal for submission to council assembly. This was the last cabinet meeting before council assembly on 25 February 2026. The Local Government Act 1992 requires that billing authorities complete and approve their budgets and set a council tax before 11 March immediately prior to the start of the financial year on 1 April 2026.

Councillor Ian Wingfield, chair of the overview and scrutiny committee presented a summary of the committee's recommendations to cabinet.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the following recommendations be agreed for recommendation to council assembly:**

1. The balanced general fund budget proposals for 2026-27.
2. In accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the local council tax amounts shown in table 7 of the report.

**That the following be approved:**

3. The housing revenue account (HRA) budget for 2026-27 (paragraphs 82 to 94 of the report).
4. The final fees and charges schedule at Appendix B of the report.

**That the following be noted:**

5. That the final Local Government Finance Settlement has not yet been published, any changes from the provisional settlement published on the 17 December 2025, will be set out in the 2026-27 budget report to council assembly on 25 February 2026.
6. The update to the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS).
7. That the MTFS, the transformation programme, ongoing budget demand and

cost pressures and HRA budget were considered by the overview and scrutiny committee in January 2026 and that the recommendations arising, and officer responses are included at Appendix E of the report.

8. The savings proposals at Appendix A of the report.
9. The climate report and the budget equality analysis report 2026-27 (Appendices C and D of the report).
10. That the Mayor of London draft budget for 2026-27 includes a proposal to increase the GLA Council Tax precept by 3%, equivalent to a £14.70 increase for a band D property.
11. The GLA council tax precept is due to be set on Thursday 26 February, one day after council assembly sets the budget for Southwark; therefore, a council tax setting committee will be convened after that date.
12. The content of the Section 25 statement by the strategic director of resources.

**NOTE:** In accordance with overview and scrutiny procedure rule 16.2, (a) (budget and policy framework) these decisions are not subject to call-in.

#### **11. BETTER REPAIRS PLAN - REPAIRS MODERNISATION**

It was not possible to circulate this report five clear days in advance of the meeting. Urgent consideration was required so that cabinet and the public should be able to note the work done to support the council's residents and housing stock as soon as possible.

##### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the better repairs plan as set out in the report which outlines Southwark's approach to improving the Southwark Repairs service be noted.
2. That the progress made under the housing services improvement programme to improve the repairs service, following the C3 grade given by the Regulator of Social Housing be noted.

#### **12. SOUTHWARK CONSTRUCTION NEW HOMES UPDATE**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the update position on the council new homes delivery programme and the achievements to 31 December 2025 be noted.

### **13. PHASE 2 OF THE TUSTIN ESTATE RENEWAL UPDATE**

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That it be noted that since the development agreement was signed in October 2022, the Tustin Estate Renewal has been progressing well on site, and that Phase 1 is about to complete and will deliver 167 new homes, including 157 council homes for social rent, and 10 homes for resident leaseholders.
2. That it be noted that the council will enter into the Phase 2 early works contract as referred to in the 2 December 2025 cabinet report.
3. That it be agreed the council should enter into the Phase 2 main works contract with BY Development Limited in the estimated sum of £164,499,943 for a period of five years, commencing May 2026.
4. That it be noted that the main works contract will include the construction of all four blocks within Phase 2, but will include separate prices for the development of each of the four blocks within Phase 2, with a break clause that can be exercised before the end of October 2026 to exclude blocks F1, F2 and H.

### **14. SOUTHWARK'S ENHANCED BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT**

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the requirement to meet the enhanced Biodiversity Duty reporting requirements introduced by the Environment Act 2021 be noted and supported.
2. That the report and Appendix 1 of the report be approved as our first statutory Biodiversity Duty report for submission to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

### **15. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS – SEPTEMBER 2027**

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Southwark Community Primary Schools Admission Arrangements (“the Arrangements”) for September 2027 onwards as set out in Appendix one of the report be agreed.

2. That the published admissions numbers (PANs) for primary community schools for September 2027 onwards as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, including the following changes be agreed:

- Keyworth Primary School – reduction in PAN from 60 to 30
- Phoenix Primary School – reduction in PAN from 90 to 60.

**16. DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD AT WESTMINSTER BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON, SE1 7XW**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the strategic director of resources be approved authorise the disposal of the property at auction or other such appropriate method including by private treaty (subject to it being sold at a price that satisfies the council's statutory obligation to achieve best consideration).
2. That the assistant director of property be authorised by the strategic director of resources to determine the appropriate reserve price or premium as appropriate.

**17. GATEWAY 1: PROCUREMENT STRATEGY APPROVAL SECURITY COVER IN SUPPORTED HOSTELS**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the procurement strategy outlined in the report for the supported hostels security contract at an estimated annual value of £1.105m for a period of three years with the option to extend by a further period of up to two years, making a total estimated contract value of £5.525m be approved.
2. That the delegation of the gateway 2 award decision report to the strategic director of housing in consultation with the cabinet member for council homes be approved.

**18. RESPONSE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT: ASYLUM ROAD CARE HOME - DISPOSAL OF THE SITE BY WAY OF A LONG-LEASEHOLD INTEREST WITH A SELECTED PARTY TO DELIVER AND OPERATE A NEW CARE HOME AT ASYLUM ROAD, SE15**

Councillor Ian Wingfield, chair of the overview and scrutiny committee was present to provide feedback in respect of the response by cabinet.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the overview and scrutiny committee (OSC) be thanked for its recommendations.
2. That the officer response to the recommendations, as set out in the 'key issues for consideration' section of the report be approved.

## **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items 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.

### **19. MINUTES**

The closed minutes of the cabinet meeting held on 6 January 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

### **20. PHASE 2 OF THE TUSTIN ESTATE RENEWAL - UPDATE**

The cabinet considered the closed information relating to this item. Please see item 13 for the decision.

### **21. GATEWAY 1: PROCUREMENT STRATEGY APPROVAL SECURITY COVER IN SUPPORTED HOSTELS**

The cabinet considered the closed information relating to this item. Please see item 17 for the decision.

The meeting ended at 5.05pm.

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**

**DEADLINE FOR NOTIFICATION OF CALL-IN UNDER SECTION 18 OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES IS MIDNIGHT, WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2026.**

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