

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 23 September 2021	Decision Taker: Health and Wellbeing Board
Report title:		Emerging Key Findings - Understanding Southwark: Daily Life & the impact of COVID-19 across the borough	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Elephant & Castle, Walworth, Old Kent Road, Camberwell, Peckham, and Dulwich	
From:		Sangeeta Leahy, Director of Public Health	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Dissemination of the final research and report to officers within the Council and associated external partners.
2. Dissemination of the final research and report at a community launch event in the autumn.
3. The *Understanding Southwark* research should inform the updated Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
4. Feedback from the Health and Wellbeing Board on the emerging key findings should inform the *Understanding Southwark* final report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. In January 2019, Cabinet adopted the *Regeneration That Works For All Framework*, an approach which ensures that the places where people live, now and in the future, create new life opportunities, promote wellbeing and reduce inequalities so that people have better lives in stronger communities.
6. The Regeneration That Works For All Framework sets out the key aims, objectives and an ambition to implement the Framework through the development of 10 Social Regeneration Charters (SRCs), shaped together with communities to reflect their needs and priorities.
7. The SRCs lay out a series of promises under broad goals, agreed with stakeholders and with communities, with clear statements on the real world measures/indicators that relate to the promises. SRCs will be used to guide how new development can best deliver benefits and opportunities to support the specific social and economic needs of local communities in the surrounding area.
8. In order to inform the development of SRCs, the Council commissioned a Southwark-based social enterprise, Social Life, to carry out socio-economic

benchmarking in six regeneration areas.

9. The research is focussed on six areas where there has been limited research previously carried out, the areas are: Elephant and Castle, Walworth, Old Kent Road, Peckham, Camberwell and Dulwich. Similar research has already been completed in Bermondsey, Canada Water and in St Thomas Street Business Improvement District. This research will form part of a longitudinal evaluation of social regeneration in the borough, with a key aim to monitor key indicators as the areas continue to develop.
10. The research was originally due to begin in March 2020, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the research was reframed to explore the impact of COVID-19 on Southwark's residents and businesses.
11. This research includes a number of different parts (interim reports have been produced for each phase of qualitative research):
 - a. A borough-wide telephone survey on impact of COVID-19 – Summer 2020
 - b. A business survey – Autumn 2020
 - c. Three phases of qualitative research – June - Sept 2020; Nov 2020 - Jan 2021; May – Aug 2021.
12. The research has been designed to have a strong focus on identifying issues that contribute to inequalities in the different areas. The outputs of this research will also be used to inform a range of COVID-19 renewal plans and projects, including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

13. Ahead of publishing the final report, *Understanding Southwark: Daily life & the impact of COVID-19 across the borough*, Social Life have set out the emerging key findings from their research (April 2020 – August 2021). The presentation of the emerging key finding, forms an additional part of the ongoing engagement with residents, officers, Councillors and businesses. See Appendix 1.
14. The pandemic has been especially challenging for our communities and our businesses in the neighbourhoods researched. While a number of residents and businesses appreciated the support provided by the Council over the last 12 months, **the research confirmed a number of consistent 'threads'**:
15. Stakeholders and local residents from all six regeneration areas stated that **mental health issues** represent a significant challenge for local people, groups and their communities.
16. There is concern that **vulnerable people are falling through gaps in government support schemes**. This includes people with no recourse to public funds, people in precarious and poorly paid work, people living in overcrowded housing, some single parents, and people experiencing mental health problems and people with disabilities.

17. Continued and additional support for young people including **youth centres and services that offer information** about local mentorships, apprenticeships and employment opportunities for young people.
18. Local residents, stakeholders and traders agreed that better knowledge and increased visibility of **the needs of black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, including Black Asian and Minority Ethnic businesses and trader groups** would ensure that they are supported more effectively.
19. Despite the continuous investment in housing by Southwark Council, the pandemic highlighted the complex housing challenges. **Decent and affordable housing** for local residents remains a key concern for many groups we spoke to, including long-standing residents, newcomers and young people.
20. **New ways of promoting local engagement** could help tackle the widespread belief that voices of local people make little impact on local decision-making, especially the voices of people with limited resources (in time and money), Black, Asian and ME groups, and young people.
21. **Digital and data exclusion have been especially highlighted** by the pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown measures have increased the use of online platforms and services, making the lack of devices, data and skills among certain groups an increasingly pressing problem for older people, low-income groups, and local residents whose first language is not English.

Policy framework implications: Informing local priorities and partnership working

22. Social Life's research has explored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting not only existing inequalities but also the valuable assets which have supported communities throughout this time. As such, the research is well placed to inform a number of key Council projects, programmes and initiatives – in order to continue to address health inequalities, support recovery and ensure regeneration improves the lives of communities.
23. The need to refresh the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, since the introduction of the new Health Inequalities Framework and an increased focus on health inequalities, presents an opportunity to build on the evidence which will be set out in Social Life's research and the broader learnings of the Council, residents and businesses over the last 18 months.
24. The aforementioned emerging key findings highlight seven key themes which have come up consistently in Social Life's qualitative research. Whilst they are well documented and acknowledged in various Council projects – the research helps provide a rich and in-depth level of information, rooted in residents and businesses' testimonies across April 2020 – August 2021.

25. There is an opportunity for this research to help continue to shape the Council's efforts to support residents and businesses in this challenging time. For example, new approaches to community engagement in the form of *Community Power*, and the development of an engagement toolkit, the implementation of the Health Inequalities Framework, the ongoing programme of 11,000 new council homes, Southwark Stands Together, emerging planning guidance, a refreshed Southwark Pioneers Fund and the Youth New Deal.
26. The research will still provide the socio-economic benchmarking to inform the development of Social Regeneration Charters (SRCs), and the emerging neighbourhood approach.
27. The first two phases of Social Life's research have been used to inform the Southwark Conversation 2. A borough-wide engagement exercise, which builds on the 2017 Southwark Conversation (the Council's largest engagement exercise, with residents, businesses and local organisations, to date). The final phase of the research presents an additional opportunity to shape this project and inform the engagement priorities.
28. The research will help shape local plans and partnership working to address the wider social determinants of health and wellbeing. The findings will be shared widely with partners and local communities, including through partnership and community dissemination events and workshops.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

29. The purpose of Social Life's research *Understanding Southwark*, is to form the socio-economic benchmarking for the development of SRCs. The SRCs are a key mechanism of the Regeneration that works for all approach, which foregrounds wellbeing as a key metric of regeneration. This is anticipated to have a positive community impact.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

30. Social Life's research has a strong focus on identifying issues that contribute to inequalities in the six different areas.
31. The emerging key findings and final report will provide valuable added insight into the experiences of a range of people, including those with no recourse to public funds, people in precarious and poorly paid work, minority ethnic communities, young people, people living in overcrowded housing, some single parents, people experiencing mental health problems and people with disabilities.
32. The Public Sector Equality Duty and implications for groups with protected characteristics will be considered further as the emerging SRCs, strategies and projects are developed in more detail.

Health impact statement

33. The outputs of this research will be used to inform COVID-19 renewal plans, a range of health improvement programmes, including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The research will also feed into the development of goals and promises for each SRC area, taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and foregrounding the measurement of health and wellbeing across time. This is anticipate to have a positive health impact for Southwark's communities.

Climate change implications

34. The emerging key findings and the final *Understanding Southwark* report have implications for the broader Climate Change Strategy and Council action. The Strategy frames climate change not just as an environmental issue, but one of social justice where we must ensure our approach reduces inequality and does not place the burden of change on those least able to afford it.
35. This research should have a positive impact on emerging climate change action planning, in particular, as the Climate Change Strategy seeks to respond to the impacts of COVID-19, build back better and foreground the health and wellbeing of local communities. The research provides in-depth insights into these issues across April 2020 – August 2021.

Resource implications

36. There are no specific resource implications arising from this paper. Any new projects and initiatives that arise through as a result of Social Life's research that require additional or reallocation of council funding would need to be considered through the normal budget, monitoring and governance processes.

Legal implications

37. There are no specific legal implications arising from this paper.

Financial implications

38. There are no immediate finance implications arising from this paper.

Consultation

39. N/A

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Governance

40. N/A

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

41. N/A

Other officers

42. N/A

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Regeneration that Works for All approach	Public Health Department	Jin Lim Jin.lim@southwar k.gov.uk
https://www.southwark.gov.uk/regeneration/regeneration-that-works-for-all#:~:text=Social%20regeneration%20is%20when%20areas,creating%20good%20employment%20opportunities%20for		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Understanding Southwark: Daily life & the impact of COVID-19 across the borough (April 2020-Aug 2021) – Emerging Key Findings

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Sangeeta Leahy, Director of Public Health Jin Lim, Deputy Director of Public Health	
Report Author	Michael Gozo, Public Health Policy Officer	
Version	1.0	
Dated	23 rd September 2021	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	No	No

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
List other officers here		
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team / Scrutiny Team		14 September 2021