

Item No. 3.2	Classification: Open	Date: 23 March 2022	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Motion on the Theme: Taking Southwark forward: a fairer and greener borough for all	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The theme for this meeting is Taking Southwark forward: a fairer and greener borough for all.

The relevant cabinet member shall submit a motion on the theme. All other political groups on the council are allowed to submit one amendment to the motion. The cabinet member's motion and the amendments do not need to be seconded. The cabinet member will present the motion to the meeting, followed by the lead opposition spokesperson's response and moving of their amendment, if any. Following this, the subject matter of the theme will be open to debate. Amendment(s) from other opposition groups on the council can be moved during this part of the meeting.

Motion from Councillor Kieron Williams, Leader of the Council

For a Fairer, Greener, Safer Borough

1. Council Assembly welcomes the huge progress that the council has made since Labour came to power in 2010, delivering a fairer, greener and safer future for all, building on Southwark Labour's vision for the borough. This includes:
 - a. Supporting 12,000 people into work since 2010, including 5,500 people supported into work since 2018 despite the significant challenge posed by the pandemic.
 - b. Creating 4,000 apprenticeships, the most of any London borough in the UK.
 - c. Halving the council's carbon emissions since 2018, delivering on a climate strategy independently ranked in the top 2 of 32 London boroughs.
 - d. Delivering on our pledge to plant over 10,000 trees
 - e. Achieving Green Flag status for 22 additional parks since 2010
 - f. On track to build and start 2,500 new council homes by May since 2014 and agreed a new Southwark Plan which will deliver 40,000 new homes by 2036.
 - g. Improving our schools so that 95% are now ranked good or outstanding by OFSTED.

- h. Guaranteed an education, training or employment opportunity for every young person leaving our care
 - i. Provided a free mental health drop in service for all children and young people
 - j. Opened five new libraries since 2010.
 - k. Retained the eighth lowest council tax in London.
2. Council Assembly also notes that the Council has been on your side supporting residents through the Covid-19 pandemic through some of the most challenging times local government has faced in recent years. This has included:
- a. Supporting over 73,000 vulnerable residents through Covid
 - b. Distributing over £250m of grants and business rate relief to local businesses
 - c. Helping 450 rough sleepers into emergency accommodation
 - d. Getting £20m of support to community groups to tackle the impact of Covid
 - e. Providing 1,700 laptops to school children who needed them the most.
3. Council Assembly notes its appreciation to officers, our voluntary and community groups, local businesses, statutory partners such as the NHS and the Police and, importantly, residents and local resident groups for the role that they have played in these achievements, and for the role that they will play in ensuring another decade of improvements for the people of Southwark.
4. Council Assembly notes that this has been achieved despite the Liberal Democrats' and Conservatives' opposition to progress which has included:
- a. Overseeing an austerity programme in government which has seen the Council's funding from central government cut by two thirds in real terms since 2010
 - b. Failing to recognise the huge improvements to council services since 2010 despite significantly higher levels of funding for local government under the previous Labour government
 - c. Abstaining on funding for a new anti-social behaviour taskforce and support for residents to tackle the cost of living crisis in this year's Budget
 - d. Failing to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the council's frontline workers who have done an incredible job continuing to deliver services throughout the pandemic.
5. Council Assembly therefore notes that only Southwark Labour can be trusted to deliver for residents, while the Southwark Liberal Democrats will only let residents down. It therefore resolves to call upon cabinet to bring forward a substantial policy programme including a refreshed Borough Plan for the next four years that will include Southwark Labour's plan to deliver a fairer, greener and safer future for residents including:

- a. Achieve a stronger economy building upon Southwark Labour's achievement of creating good jobs. The new Borough Plan should look to create more jobs and apprenticeships in high growth industries that can give back to our borough and our planet, and put in place measures to support Southwark's high streets
 - b. Tackle the climate emergency, cutting carbon emissions again with greener buildings, more parks, nature sites, cycle hangers and electric vehicle charging points to maintain momentum in making Southwark carbon neutral by 2030
 - c. Deliver safer streets and estates investing £2m in a taskforce to tackle anti-social behaviour hotspots, upgrade street lighting across the borough and install more CCTV cameras
 - d. Build more council homes and deliver more homes of different tenures for the benefit of all Southwark residents
 - e. Support our families by tackling health inequalities, particularly through mental health challenges.
6. Although this represents an ambitious set of pledges for Southwark, Council Assembly acknowledges that more can be achieved with greater financial resources. Therefore, Council Assembly also resolves to campaign for a fairer financial settlement from central government that does not ignore the wide disparities that still exist in London, with those on the lowest incomes more likely to suffer from health problems, squalid living conditions with no prospect of owning their own home and often insecure employment in the form of zero hour contracts.
7. Council Assembly also acknowledges that the cost of living crisis is having a significant impact on our residents' finances, with a pronounced impact on those on the lowest incomes. Government has compounded these issues by cutting Universal Credit by £20 a week for those most in need of government support, as well as increasing national insurance which will hit people on the lowest incomes. Council Assembly therefore calls upon Cabinet to:
- a. Set up a cost of living fund to support Southwark's most vulnerable residents
 - b. Support the national Labour Party's plan for a more comprehensive package of measures and sustain a campaign for more support for the borough's residents.
8. Levelling up has also been described as a key pillar of the government's strategy to tackle inequality, however in reality there is very little for London boroughs, where the gap between rich and poor is the largest. Council Assembly acknowledges that the Council has made great improvements including lowering health disparities across the borough, building 2,500 new council homes since 2014 and cutting the council's carbon emissions since 2018, however without government support it will be impossible for the council to close the gap completely. Therefore, council assembly calls upon cabinet to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities expressing its support for the London Councils position that states that levelling up the UK does not

mean levelling down London, and campaign for a fair share of the levelling up fund.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet members Motion	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Constitutional Team Constitutional.Team@southwark.gov.uk

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
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