

<b>Item No.</b> 9.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 12 September 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission 2023	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		None	
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>		Councillor James McAsh, Climate Emergency, Clean Air and Streets	

## **FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR JAMES McASH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY, CLEAN AIR AND STREETS**

Everything happens on land. It is where we live, work, and play. When utilised effectively, it creates opportunities that can transform our lives. It holds enormous potential for the public good; however, all too often, this potential is overlooked due to a narrow focus on private profit. Despite its capacity to influence every aspect of our lives, decisions about land use are frequently made behind closed doors, without involving those most affected by it.

Southwark is one of the most densely populated parts of England. In other words, we don't have a lot of land to go around, so we must value the land we do have. It is a significant source of both wealth and power, and its uneven distribution can generate and perpetuate social injustices. Yet, here in Southwark, large portions of land are owned by the council, other public bodies, and organisations with a social purpose. What if these major landowners were to allocate more of their land for the public good? What if Southwark's diverse communities were genuinely empowered to shape the land around them? These were the questions we had in mind when we launched the Southwark Land Commission. Recognising that we didn't possess the answers ourselves, we convened an independent body comprised of experts, major landowners, and community stakeholders. Their task was to find ways to make more land available for the public good.

The following report represents the work of this Commission. I am grateful to the Commissioners and all others who contributed to it. It is ambitious and far-reaching, and its implementation will pose challenges. Nevertheless, it is a necessary and timely contribution to a much-needed conversation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To note the recommendations set out in *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission*.
2. To agree that officers consider the recommendations set out the report

and report back to Cabinet in early 2024.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3. The Council Delivery Plan 2022-26 includes a commitment to deliver a Land Commission to identify how more land in Southwark can be used for the benefit of the local community.
4. The commitment seeks to “*Identify how more land in Southwark can be freed up for public good, including quality green space, food growing, active travel and genuinely affordable housing, working with major landowners including the NHS, Transport for London, the Port of London Authority, Dulwich Estate and local faith organisations*”.
5. Behind the commitment is a recognition that not enough of land in the borough is used for social purpose and so provides genuine benefit to the local community. This leads to real challenges for our residents including access to affordable homes, decent quality workspace and accessible community spaces. These challenges entrench existing and longstanding inequalities in our communities.
6. The recommendations of the Southwark Land Commission (SLC) are set out in *Land for Good. The Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission* (see Appendix 1).

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

7. To deliver on the Council Delivery Plan commitment to establish a Southwark Land Commission, the council commissioned Partnering Regeneration Development (PRD) in November 2022. The brief was to establish a Commission independent of the council to explore the issues surrounding land use in Southwark, and drive additional community benefit.
8. The Southwark Land Commission was formally established in February 2023. The Commission was chaired by Miatta Fahnbulleh, Chief Executive of the New Economics Foundation, and included representatives from the community, experts and academics in the field, and big landowners in the borough including the NHS, TfL and the Diocese of Southwark.
9. The work of the Commission took place between February and July 2023, and included four formal meetings of the Commission, gathering of evidence, and a large number of workshops and task and finish groups. Extensive community engagement was integral to the work of the commission and included four area-based workshops that took place in March, as well as workshops with underrepresented groups and specific feedback sessions on the emerging recommendations that took place in June.

10. The resulting *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission* sets out seven core recommendations and 25 priority actions for the Council to consider. These core recommendations are:
  - Put social purpose at the heart of land use
  - Map what's there and what isn't
  - Take control of our land and assets
  - Defend and extend affordable accommodation for all
  - Cherish our natural capital and decarbonise our land
  - Give the community real power and voice
  - Disrupt the status quo and unlock bigger changes.
11. The actions set out within each of these core recommendations have implications for the ambitions set out in Southwark 2030, in particular those on homes, neighbourhoods, nature, prosperity, culture and health and wellbeing.
12. If agreed by cabinet, officers will consider the recommendations set out in the report, and report back to Cabinet in early 2024 about any options for delivery and the respective resource implications.

### **Policy framework implications**

13. *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission* supports the Council Delivery Plan objective to establish a Commission to “*Identify how more land in Southwark can be freed up for public good, including quality green space, food growing, active travel and genuinely affordable housing, working with major landowners including the NHS, Transport for London, the Port of London Authority, Dulwich Estate and local faith organisations*”.
14. The Southwark Land Commission report aims to support the broader objectives of Southwark 2023, and in particular the eight draft ambitions set out for the borough that have been developed following a period of extensive consultation and engagement.
  - Homes - All residents in Southwark have a home they are proud of, that meets their needs, and they can afford
  - Neighbourhoods - All residents will be proud of living in caring, connected and welcoming Southwark neighbourhoods
  - Nature - Southwark is a borough full of nature that residents can enjoy and be part of
  - Climate - Southwark will be an international leader in tackling the climate emergency
  - Safety - All people in Southwark feel and are safe Prosperity - Southwark's economy provides greener, fairer and good quality work, education and training opportunities for all
  - Health & wellbeing - People across every part of Southwark's community are living long, healthy lives with good mental health

- Culture - Everyone in Southwark can enjoy our vibrant culture and arts scene that the borough has available.
15. The recommendations may also support the delivery of key borough plans and strategies, including the Southwark Plan, Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and emerging Southwark Economic Strategy, the detail of which will be assessed by officers in due course.

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

16. The *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission* proposes a series of recommendations that seek to ensure that more land in Southwark is used for the benefit of the local community, and in doing so tackle issues of racial injustice, inequality and poor health.
17. There are no immediate community, equalities or health impacts arising from this cabinet paper, which at this stage is asking cabinet to note the recommendations set out in the report.
18. A detailed assessment of community, equalities or health impacts will be undertaken as part of the process of considering the recommendations and any options for delivery.

### **Climate change implications**

19. The *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission* makes recommendations that support delivery of the council's climate change and net-zero ambitions.
20. There are no immediate climate change implications arising from this cabinet paper, which at this stage is asking cabinet to note the recommendations set out in the report.
21. A detailed assessment of climate change impacts will be undertaken as part of the process of taking forward the recommendations and considering how they may be delivered.

### **Resource implications**

22. There are no immediate resource implications arising from this cabinet paper, which at this stage is asking cabinet to note the recommendations set out in *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission*.
23. A detailed assessment of resource implications will be undertaken as part of the process of taking forward the recommendations and considering how they may be delivered.

## **Consultation**

24. Community and stakeholder engagement was integral to the commission process. The Commission drew on the council's broader conversations for Southwark 2030 but also conducted its own specific engagement.
25. Seven engagement sessions with community groups: four area-based workshops with relevant community groups and representatives, a specific workshop for the borough's most under-represented communities, and two sessions with previous attendees for reflection and feedback.
26. To reach those from more under-represented groups, a specific workshop was held, and the Commission attended meetings of the Southwark Youth Parliament and the Southwark Black Parents Forum.
27. One-to-one discussions with stakeholders (both internal within various council departments and external representatives including major landowners) within different relevant sectors.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Assistant Chief Executive, Governance & Assurance**

28. This report is for Cabinet to note the recommendations of *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission*, a report produced by a body independent of the council. There are no legal implications arising from the noting of this independent report.
29. There are likely to be legal implications and relevant statutory frameworks to consider when officers examine the individual recommendations of the *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission* and report back to Cabinet in due course.

### **Strategic Director of Finance (SC23/024)**

30. This report is requesting the Cabinet to note the recommendations set out in *Land for Good, the Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission* and also notes other recommendations of the report.
31. The strategic director of finance and governance notes that there are no new immediate financial implications arising from this report.
32. The strategic director of finance notes that financial appraisals will be carried out as any new plans are developed and will be subject to future reports which will include recommendations the ways to deliver those plans and identifying the revenue or capital resources for any new commitments.
33. Staffing and any other costs connected with this report to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Land for Good. The Report of the 2023 Southwark Land Commission.

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor James McAsh, Climate Emergency, Clean Air and Streets	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Stephen Gaskell, Assistant Chief Executive, Strategy and Communities	
<b>Report Author</b>	Danny Edwards, Head of Local Economy Nazmin Yeahia, Senior Strategy Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	31 August 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance & Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance	Yes	Yes
List other officers here	None	None
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		31 August 2023