

Policy and Resources Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

Climate Change

Climate Change and Budget 2024/25 to 2026/27

1. The council is committed to reducing carbon in its own operations, estate and across the borough. Our ambition is for Southwark to be net zero by 2030. Despite a strong climate strategy and action plan and another year of solid progress, Southwark, in common with other local authorities, remains off track to meet this target. The scale of the challenge remains enormous and we continue to call on Government to introduce reliable long term funding for councils to take the action that is urgently needed. We are concerned that without the Government taking action, the challenge for Southwark and all local councils is even harder.
2. The council is using its resources to tackle the climate emergency. In this budget, we have again assessed whether budget changes have any significant impact on carbon emissions. As in previous years, most of the changes to the budget will have a neutral impact on climate change. The greater impact is again how we should use existing resources more effectively to deliver services and carbon reduction. Across all parts of the council's work, officers need to consider climate change and look for ways to reduce carbon in our operations. This report sets out some of the steps we are taking and will continue to take across a range of areas of our work. While there are some large and visible projects specifically designed to reduce emissions, just as important are smaller change in service delivery which are all reducing emissions and ensure that the council is using its resources in a way which cuts carbon and our contribution to climate change.
3. We have dedicated funding for climate capital programmes through the £25m Climate Capital Fund. We continue to draw on this to invest in capital programmes that reduce carbon or where additional capital spend can improve carbon reduction. This includes investment in Burgess Park Sports Centre including air source heat pumps and a green roof; feasibility work has started on two cemetery sites to develop a programme of climate reduction, which we expect to include air source heat pumps and EV charging points. £1.8m is allocated to library retrofit including green aspects of the Peckham Library refurbishment, and work on Kingswood. £2.5m is allocated to the roll out of cycle hangers, with the programme running until 25/26. In the last year, we have also funded projects which are now complete and having an impact. This includes the borough's first Library of Things which has opened at Canada Water Library, and the planting of a new Tiny Forest on Peckham Rye.
4. In 2024/25 and beyond we expect our capital investment will continue. Currently £21m of the £25m is allocated, and as well as programming in much of this spend, we will work to identify new projects to invest in to save carbon.
5. The council has also established a Green Buildings Fund. This is money collected from developers to offset carbon from developments. In 2024/25 we will identify new projects which could benefit from this funding and ways to roll out these carbon offset schemes.
6. As well as direct investment, we are also working to increase the funding that is available. We plan to launch Southwark's Community Municipal Investment this

year. Sometimes called Green Bonds, the CMI will be a way for local people to invest in green projects in the borough. We will aim to raise up to £6m over six years, making it the largest and most ambitious CMI in the country. We are also making our first investments through the Community Energy Programme, where we fund projects in the community to generate clean energy and invest in programmes that build capacity and delivery of green energy.

7. The council now has a well established climate change team that work across the council and the community to deliver our climate change strategy and action plan. The team is expanding with greater project delivery capacity and a tighter focus on maximising external opportunities and funding. In the absence of long term sustainable government funding we need to invest in resource within the council to pursue the various funding opportunities which exist and ensure that the council is well positioned to secure them.
8. In addition, we will continue to invest in services to support the community apply for funding including the Green Homes Advice service we run in partnership with London Southbank University and which helps households better understand steps they need to take and sources of funding that may be available. The council is therefore using its resources not just to increase income for the council and direct investment but also other ways of money to come into the borough to reduce the borough's overall emissions.
9. The Streets for People strategy will transform how we use our streets and steer our investment into projects which reduce carbon and support more sustainable travel and movement in the borough. The Council is already embarking on parking improvements that prioritise sustainable transportation options, reduce traffic congestion, and encourage the use of low-emission vehicles to significantly reduce the carbon footprint associated with transportation.
10. Key projects moving forward include the electric vehicle charging infrastructure on estates and the adopting and delivery of a new EV plan for the borough. We retain and will continue to deliver our ambitious plans on bike hangers and invest in more pedestrian and cycling friendly infrastructure schemes.
11. Southwark continues to encourage waste reduction including reuse and recycling. Our investment in waste management means we remain one of the best inner London boroughs for recycling. Through this budget process, we have continued to consider the impact of any changes to waste management on climate.
12. We continue to deliver some of the highest environmental standards in planning in the country. In 2024/25 we will continue work on developing a Climate Emergency SPD to further improve the environmental standards of new buildings, as well as updating other climate emergency policies. We introduced monitoring of energy policies in 2022 when the Southwark Plan was adopted with the updated policy. This information is being collated and will be available as an evidence base to inform policy development. We are also working with most other London Boroughs to progress development of our evidence base and policies.

13. In 2023/24 we brought our leisure centres in-house. We are now starting work to invest in reducing the emissions from these buildings which are amongst some of the biggest contributors to emissions in the council. In 2024/25 we will be investing in our leisure centres with a range of interventions to reduce carbon including air source heat pumps and improvements to building management systems.
14. In housing, we are using our resources to minimise the emissions associated with the housing stock. The overall managed stock is over 52,000 including leasehold properties. Of these, around 17,000 are connected to some form of communal heating, either from the SELCP heat network, or from a series of communal boilers. These communal systems enable the temperature of the water in circulation to be seasonally adjusted to minimise gas consumption and therefore reduce the amount of carbon emitted. Communal heating also allows for quicker and easier decarbonisation than individual heating systems, due to the ability to apply low carbon technologies at scale. Where individual boilers are required in tenants homes, we ensure that we are installing with the most efficient gas boilers currently available.
15. Within our new homes programme, where the new homes cannot be connected to existing heat networks, greater use of renewable technology is being used, such as heat pumps to further reduce the use of fossil fuels. Alongside reducing direct fossil fuel consumption, action is being taken to reduce the amount of electricity consumed in running the communal areas of our buildings through introducing new technology such as retrofitting LED lighting; replacement and new emergency lighting is being replaced with LED smart scan lighting which will reduce electricity consumption by up to 70%. We ensure that we install low energy lighting and control units on new lifts, that doors and windows are the most energy efficient currently available and are investing in interventions such as over-cladding on the Kingswood estate to improve thermal efficiency; and when replacing roofs use the latest thermal insulation to maximise thermal efficiency and minimise heat loss. We are ensuring that our investment is, where possible, saving energy. This is in addition to already moving to a green energy tariff for all our operational work.
16. We are investing in making our estates great and through this programme are investing in carbon reduction too. The great estates programme also has delivered improvements, including 190 growing plots. As well as providing environmental improvements, there have also been other positive benefits in terms of health and community cohesion. Also significant improvements to waste management, using purpose built bin enclosures, improved signage, and use of QR codes to report full bins. There has been a marked improvement in recycling and a reduction in fly tipping.
17. Within Southwark Repairs, there are a number of activities aimed at reducing the services carbon footprint. A repairs improvement plan is currently underway with the aim of increasing the number of repairs that can be completed in a single visit, reducing the travelling to and from a single repair and therefore increasing customer satisfaction and the efficiency of the service. In repairs also, we are

working with our key supplier to source more environmentally sustainable materials.

18. As well as changes in housing, we are focusing on our wider operational emissions and particularly our target to halve our operational emissions by 2026. Corporate Facilities Management (CFM) continues with a programme of lighting replacement – this is installing LED lighting across the operational estate, so far CFM has upgraded the lighting in 10 properties with a further 3 scheduled to be completed this year.
19. Solar panels have been installed on 10 buildings. We are able to live track the energy being generated by the solar panels and show what that equates to in terms of carbon savings. Interventions such as this improve our knowledge of the impact our work is having. We continue to invest in reducing gas consumption in our operational buildings. We will continue with a programme of replacing gas boilers with air source heat pumps and our projections are that by 2026 we will have eliminated a further 822tCO₂ per annum, approximately 68% of CO₂ directly emissions attributed to gas.
20. We are continuing to apply for external funding where we have suitable projects. We have applied for funding from Government for projects to change our heating system at Tooley Street and are awaiting the outcome of this application. We will continue to maximise external funding opportunities. We will continue to plan and deliver sustainability schemes through our lifecycle replacement programme. The aim is to deliver £12million of lifecycle projects within the next 24 months.
21. The council has multiple calls on its resources. In some areas there are more direct impacts on carbon reductions than others, but across all of our work and operations it is important that we make carbon savings where we can and deliver services in the most sustainable way.
22. In children's services, the Southwark Homes for Southwark Children programme is working to develop local children's residential provision, which is being developed to meet high standards of energy efficiency. We are also developing more local foster care provision to increase the opportunity for our children to remain living within Southwark, meaning a reduction in travel outside of Southwark both for children and their social workers undertaking visits to children's placements.
23. We have been working with contractors to reduce emissions from our contracted services. For example, the Council's SEND transport bus contractor, has committed to delivering a service with a clear environmental focus the key aspects being the use of fuel efficient vehicles (lower emissions), having a depot in the borough (low mileage), and operating an efficient fleet (optimised use of vehicles). The current contract runs for two further years (until 31 August 2025) during which time the Council will work with the provider to look at green alternatives including developing electric fleets and moving away from petrol and diesel buses.

24. As well as changes to our front line services, we are making changes to how we deliver back office functions. We continue to invest in e-billing of council tax. There are currently 148,000 customers across Southwark of which 69,000 are signed up to e-billing.
25. The move to digital while saving carbon, through things like the reduction of paper and production of printed materials, does also have a carbon impact. We are working to understand this so we can take steps to minimise it. This includes energy consumption in data centres, services and network infrastructure, and the increase in e-waste as devices have shorter lifecycles. We have been making changes to reduce our carbon impact, this includes transitioning to virtualised servers which reduced the need of physical hardware.
26. Across all aspects of the councils work, our resources are being spent in a way which is trying to cut emissions. As set out above, this is sometimes large capital investment, but also a commitment by the council to use existing resources better, more effectively, and seeking to maximise the potential carbon saving. Changes in decision making such as the requirement to consider carbon in all decisions means that across the council services are increasingly looking at how they can use their resources better to tackle the climate emergency.

Climate analysis 2024/25 to 2026/27

27. This document sets out the initial climate change impact of the budget savings and commitments proposed as part of the Council's Policy and Resources Strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27. By its nature, the Climate Change impact of these proposals is limited – the savings and efficiencies only account for small proportion of the total net General Fund Revenue Budget. As set out above, much of the council's climate work is delivered through capital expenditure, the Housing Revenue Account, and through partnership working using our leadership role to reduce carbon beyond directly funded programmes.

Methodology

28. Through the budget setting process, officers have considered the climate implications of the proposals that have been submitted for consideration. This has enabled the council to consider whether the changes that are made to the budget will have a positive or negative impact on the council's overall emissions.
29. The council has made a line-by-line assessment of all proposed budget lines for climate impact. Each line was rated with a 1 to 5 score, where 1 was significant positive impact and 5 was significant negative impact. A score of 3 indicated that the proposal had a neutral climate impact.
30. These assessments, as the proposals were being developed, aimed to give an initial indication of potential impact, on the understanding that further work, in the form of detailed climate change impact assessments may be required for those rated either 1 or 5.

31. We have taken a similar approach to previous years. We have also again looked for best practice from other local authorities. We have not found other councils that have developed, or are developing, a climate change impact analysis for this purpose. As such we remain at the forefront of this work, and will continue to develop the approach further for future years.

Climate Change Impact

32. From the initial assessments, most of the proposals had a neutral impact on climate change. As in previous years, this is as expected as the majority of our climate impact is through our capital programme.
33. Only one proposal has a slight negative impact, and seventeen proposals have a slight positive impact on climate change.
34. It is important to recognise that any impact, positive or negative, will have very little significance in terms of carbon impact.

Annual Report

35. The council publishes an annual report setting out how it is delivering on its action plan – this includes finance risk. The most recent report was published in July 2023. The council will publish its next report in July 2024.
36. The Climate Change Strategy and Action plan established the council's approach to tackling the climate emergency and the work that it will do to tackle it. As set out in both the climate strategy and the budget report, it is clear that all the resources that are needed are not available to deliver this. This is not an issue unique to Southwark, but a challenge for all councils and everyone committed to tackling climate change. The Government has to take action on climate change and increase its investment to climate change solutions. The council will continue to do all it can to tackle climate change, but our impact will remain limited without greater Government action.
37. The table below sets out those lines in the budget which had either a positive or negative impact. In many cases, even when they are positive or negative this is only a relatively small impact for example where there is a reduction in staffing, this may have a positive impact as there is less travel, office space and resource used to support that staff member. Where a budget proposal has a greater potential impact, this is detailed in the table below.

Budget Lines and Carbon Impact

38. The table below is a summary of the budget proposals in the full report. This table includes an assessment of the climate impact as positive, negative or neutral.

Ref.	Description	Climate Impact	2024/25 £0	3 Year Total £000
101	Efficiencies through promoting greater independence for clients linked to ongoing recovery post discharge through early and regular reviews and interventions such as bed-based reablement, support from occupational therapists, aids and adaptations as well as greater use of universal services and the transitioning of clients into more independent accommodation.	3 - Neutral	-2,000	-4,500
102	Efficiencies through maximisation of extra care, night time provision and step down accommodation.	2 - Positive impact	-500	-1,000
103	Efficiency as result of review and re-distribution of work across Adults' Social Care	3 - Neutral	-500	-500
105	Telecare transformation	3 - Neutral	-250	-500
106	Consolidation of performance and data functions, enabled through modernisation and digital transformation of performance frameworks and systems	3 - Neutral	-300	-300
107	Modernisation of business management and administration capacity through digital transformation	2 - Positive impact	-354	-1,350
108	Reformed service delivery and development of an enhanced pathway to independence for Care Leavers	2 - Positive impact	-746	-1,548
109	Continued reduction of numbers of children in care, and in high cost placements, through ongoing investment in effective services to support children and families.	3 - Neutral	-1,063	-4,043
110	Transformation of Children and Family Centres into Family Hubs, making most efficient and effective use of partnership early help resources and capacity to reduce higher end late intervention for supporting families. This efficiency also takes into account a 21% reduction in the number of 0-4 year olds in recent years.	3 - Neutral	-185	-435
111	Review staffing structure whilst protecting statutory functions within children's social care.	3 - Neutral	-380	-898

112	Efficiencies in the Public Health workforce.	3 - Neutral	-200	-200
113	Free school meals - reduced numbers due to falling pupil numbers.	3 - Neutral	-221	-401
114	Efficiencies in delivery of sexual health service provision.	3 - Neutral	-228	-228
115	Efficiencies in delivery of Healthy Adults health promotion and outreach services	3 - Neutral	-230	-230
116	Efficiencies in delivery of Children and Young People outreach services	3 - Neutral	-360	-360
119	Review all support functions across the division (business support, finance, project support, data and performance and data)	3 - Neutral	-125	-125
120	Consolidation of council work relating to information advice and guidance, work placements and post-16 provision.	3 - Neutral	0	-9
122	Prioritise delivery of Education Psychology Team to delivery of statutory duties and support to the most in need pupils	3 - Neutral	0	-280
123	Integration of Early Years support into Family Hubs neighbourhood delivery models	3 - Neutral	-152	-152
124	Savings through senior management reductions through joining Children and Families, and Education Services.	3 - Neutral	-180	-180
125	Reduction in contribution to costs related to insourced hostels due to consolidation from 6 to 5 buildings due to improved flow of support and continued home first approach.	3 - Neutral	-100	-100
126	Reduction in training budget to reflect actual spend over the last few years	3 - Neutral	-5	-5
127	Funding from PH Grant to support the commissioning activities related to the division in terms of procurement and commissioning.	3 - Neutral	-35	-35
128	Rationalisation of ancillary software (small ICT contracts)	3 - Neutral	-40	-40
129	Rationalisation of use of ICT systems for record keeping into a single database	3 - Neutral	0	-300
131	Rationalisation of the corporate estate including Talfourd House, Curlew House, 47B East Dulwich Road and Sumner Road	2 - Positive impact	-270	-490

132	Review of corporate contact centre/Exchequer customer services to promote digital first, align performance standards/look at generating economies and consistent approaches to performance management.	3 - Neutral	-80	-80
135	Rationalisation of the three year strategy for the Strategy and Communities team and activity to ensure the target operating model is contained within a fixed financial envelope.	3 - Neutral	-70	-234
136	Resolution of outstanding contract issues within the Waste Management contract	3 - Neutral	-800	-800
138	Reorganisation of Property and Sustainable Growth Division	3 - Neutral	-100	-300
139	Review of Communities directorate structure	3 - Neutral	-60	-60
142	Conduct a review of expenditure and income in the light of regional and national benchmarks particularly where current financial performance indicates that Southwark is a high-spend council, and consider options for change.	2 - Positive impact	0	-1,000
143	Reduction in property related costs (utilities/rent/service charges) by relocating Cleansing and Grounds maintenance services from Sandgate Industrial Estate	2 - Positive impact	0	-450
144	Savings arising from the replacement of circuits across council buildings as part of the national switchover of the Public Switched Telephone Network from analogue to digital. Savings will accrue across council departments.	3 - Neutral	-150	-150
145	O2 mobile phone Contract Renegotiation and allocation policy review	3 - Neutral	-75	-200
146	Efficiencies through centralising of some departmental IT support teams into the Tech & Digital service.	3 - Neutral	0	-200
147	Technology and Digital Service staffing review	3 - Neutral	0	-80
148	Income collection staffing re-organisation	3 - Neutral	-370	-370
149	Merging of contact centres	3 - Neutral	-220	-220

150	Increased collection of Council Tax through reducing debt arising through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) following migration to Universal Credit	3 - Neutral	0	-250
151	Finance system replacement	3 - Neutral	0	-600
152	Review and reduction of debt provision (cross cutting), in tandem with refresh of debt recovery approach and processes.	3 - Neutral	-350	-1,050
153	Removal of risk premium on employers' pension contributions for decarbonisation strategy following above benchmark fund performance.	3 - Neutral	-1,600	-1,600
154	Reorganise Professional Finance Services to increase value-adding activity.	3 - Neutral	-50	-50
160	More efficient use of resources for Helpdesk	3 - Neutral	0	-200
163	Development of a corporate landlord model, inc. standardised approach to facilities management and opportunities for further income generation	3 - Neutral	0	-700
164	Rationalisation of staffing structures across Governance & Assurance.	3 - Neutral	-100	-350
165	Reduced spend on third party support following implementation of SAP replacement	3 - Neutral	0	-68
166	HR & OD staffing efficiencies resulting from the replacement of SAP	3 - Neutral	0	-100
167	Reduction in need to pay overtime	3 - Neutral	0	-300
169	Rationalisation and efficiencies in administration of meetings	2 - Positive impact	0	-50
170	Public Health investment in parenting programmes (see matching commitment, line 405)	3 - Neutral	-180	-360
171	Insource some Internal Audit & Anti-Fraud Support	3 - Neutral	0	-94
201	Telecare - Income Generation from Health related services and digital health provision	3 - Neutral	0	-500
202	Fairer contributions to Adults Social Care	3 - Neutral	-1,665	-3,165
203	Introducing a flat two tier fee for (1) the equipment only and (2) equipment and response service in Telecare	3 - Neutral	-50	-100

204	Review fees in line with inflation (still significantly lower than market rates). Necessary in order to ensure that appropriate charges are made to the HRA, other statutory accounts and to external parties where appropriate	3 - Neutral	-150	-150
205	Increase in Waste Management fees and charges including increases in Commercial Waste, recycling and other charges and increasing the Garden Waste charge from £60 to £80 per annum, maintaining charging levels below both the London average and near neighbours.	4 - Negative impact	-417	-417
206	Phase 2 Private Rented Sector Licensing - Additional income as a result of new schemes to licence private rented sector property (phase 2 - designations 3 and 4 of selective licensing)	3 Neutral	-1,100	-1,100
207	Increased commercialisation opportunities	3 Neutral	0	-200
208	Savings from investment in Active Travel	2 - Positive impact	-1,240	-1,860
209	Increase in Network Management income volumes	3 Neutral	-150	-250
210	Review of PCN charges set by London Councils (Southwark currently issues approx. 190,000).	2 - Positive impact	0	-950
211	Additional Income from Increased Fees and Charges across Environment directorate services	3 – Neutral	-381	-951
212	Increases in planning fees by CPI, mandatory planning fees and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) admin fees	3 - Neutral	-275	-987
213	Additional Income from Increased Fees and Charges in Leisure Services	3 - Neutral	-750	-1,727
214	Additional or uplifted charges in parks & leisure centre car parks, and across some other discretionary services – including tennis court hire and youth & adventure play, informed by benchmarking undertaken	2 - Positive impact	-200	-200
215	Additional income as a result of revenue savings at leisure centres from climate work	2 - Positive impact	-150	-345

216	Review of targeted leisure centre programmes, supported by Public Health.	3 - Neutral	-200	-600
217	Rental Income generation from Tooley Street	3 - Neutral	0	-1,080
219	Better Care Fund provides a stable contribution to Adult Social Care Hospital Discharge Teams and other related services. Additional BCF has been approved.	3 - Neutral	-500	-1,350
220	Increases in Commercial property income from rent reviews and letting of void properties	2 - Positive impact	-550	-1,101
301	Undertake review of the Southwark Information and Advice Service (SIAS) team.	3 - Neutral	0	-141
302	Review of Noise Nuisance service in order to ensure that the service continues to meet demand at the high volume times	3 - Neutral	0	-90
303	Re-organise the Cleaning Service to provide a more efficient management and operational structure, making better use of technology, and enhancing flexible working arrangements for staff.	2 - Positive impact	-200	-200
304	Grounds Maintenance efficiencies - Idverde contract	3 - Neutral	-50	-50
305	Efficiencies in tree contract and capitalisation of some costs	3 - Neutral	-50	-50
312	Closure of Seven Islands Leisure Centre, when Canada Water leisure Centre opens	3 - Neutral	0	-1,000
314	Delete Vacant Posts	3 - Neutral	-250	-250
315	Rationalisation of resources in the Elections Team	3 - Neutral	-70	-70
316	Remodelling of library service - including introduction of additional services/uses. Will be informed by usage/demand and may include some self-service and some community management.	3 - Neutral	-50	-300
402	Food security and sustainable food strategy	2 - Positive impact	90	90
403	School meal price increase (+ allocation methodology change)	3 - Neutral	425	425
404	Health outreach to health inclusion and vulnerable groups	2 - Positive impact	152	152

405	Prevention in Children's settings	3 - Neutral	180	360
406	Investment in Community Reproductive Health services	2 - Positive impact	227	227
408	Procurement Support to the existing commissioning team and further staffing investment in this team	3 - Neutral	85	85
409	Contribution to Supported Housing	3 - Neutral	80	80
413	Investment into Special Education Needs (SEND) transport provision to deal with demand and inflationary pressures of the service	3 - Neutral	1,936	2,804
414	Investment into Special Education Needs (SEND) delivery teams functions	3 - Neutral	0	700
415	Increased communications and workload associated with the Election Act - specifically the new requirement to show photo ID when voting	3 - Neutral	25	25
417	Increased demand for No Recourse to Public Funds client payments and accommodation.	3 - Neutral	700	700
418	Harmonisation of leisure centre staff contracts	3 - Neutral	750	750
419	Cost of additional repairs and maintenance in Leisure Centres	2 - Positive impact	250	250
420	Increase in IT and Licensing costs arising through the in-sourcing of the council's Leisure service.	3 - Neutral	286	314
423	Implementation of period poverty commitment	3 - Neutral	100	100
424	Reduction in rental income arising from down-sizing of the ICB presence in the Tooley Street building	3 - Neutral	300	300
425	Introducing an automatic disability related expenditure (DRE) disregard scheme	3 - Neutral	415	415
426	Additional cost attached to bringing resilience support in line with resilience standards for London.	3 - Neutral	8	8
427	Overview & Scrutiny - Support costs for change in meeting style to implement the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review	3 - Neutral	25	25