

<b>Item No.</b> 5.2	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 20 March 2024	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Members' Motions	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The councillor introducing or “moving” the motion may make a speech directed to the matter under discussion. This may not exceed five minutes<sup>1</sup>. A second councillor will then be asked by the Mayor to “second” the motion. This may not exceed three minutes without the consent of the Mayor.

The meeting will then debate the issue and any amendments on the motion will be dealt with. At the end of the debate the mover of the motion may make a concluding speech, known as a “right of reply”. If an amendment is carried, the mover of the amendment shall hold the right of reply to any subsequent amendments and, if no further amendments are carried, at the conclusion of the debate on the substantive motion.

The Mayor will then ask councillors to vote on the motion (and any amendments).

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution allocates responsibility for particular functions to council assembly, including approving the budget and policy framework, and allocates to the cabinet responsibility for developing and implementing the budget and policy framework and overseeing the running of council services on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, any matters that are reserved to the cabinet (i.e. housing, social services, regeneration, environment, education etc.) cannot be decided upon by council assembly without prior reference to the cabinet. While it would be in order for council assembly to discuss an issue, consideration of any of the following should be referred to the cabinet:

- to change or develop a new or existing policy
- to instruct officers to implement new procedures
- to allocate resources.

**Note:** In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.10 (7) & (8) (prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the order in which motions appear in the agenda may not necessarily be the order in which they are considered at the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Council assembly procedure rule 1.14 (9)

**1. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE (Seconded by Councillor Cassandra Brown)**

**Back the Bakerloo Line Extension**

1. Council Assembly believes:
  - a. The Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Extension will deliver for people and businesses across our city and country, creating a more connected, productive and sustainable city and supporting the national economic growth our country needs.
  - b. The Bakerloo Line is an iconic part of the Underground, and a vital piece of economic infrastructure with 920,000 jobs – one in six in London – within a 12-minute walk of a station.
  - c. The Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Extension would have a transformational impact on London, by:
    - i. Boosting the economy:
      - Supporting 150,000 jobs in total, including nearly 10,000 directly
      - Creating 190,000 sqm of new commercial floorspace,
      - Generating £1.5bn of GVA per year
    - ii. Tackling the housing crisis:
      - Supporting 107,000 homes along the entire line
      - This includes unlocking 20,400 new homes as a direct result of the extension
    - iii. Greening our transport network:
      - Creating 150,000 additional public transport trips
      - 20,800 fewer car trips daily
      - Improving connectivity, with travel time from Old Kent Road to Oxford Circus cut by nearly two thirds from 38 minutes to 13 minutes;
2. Council Assembly notes:
  - a. The recent major construction milestone with a “bottoming out” ceremony for the new integrated ticket hall at Elephant and Castle’s Northern line tube station. The ITH will serve as the primary entrance to the Northern Line and represents the first piece of substantial infrastructure to support the proposed Bakerloo Line extension
  - b. Over the last decade, the council has invested over £70m into the Elephant & Castle tube upgrade, providing a new step-free station and integrating the Northern line with the Bakerloo Line and its anticipated extension.

- c. That the Mayor of London, and the Deputy Mayor for Transport, have offered their vocal support for the Bakerloo Line Extension.
  - d. Southwark's Cabinet have just agreed an allocation of Strategic CIL of £350,000 towards the Elephant and Castle over-ground station and £250,000 towards the Bakerloo Line Extension.
  - e. The Bakerloo Line Extension now has support from numerous Councils across London and the Leader of the Council Kieron Williams has been a key voice in rallying and securing this support.
  - f. The Bakerloo Line Extension is vital to delivering new homes, jobs and green spaces in the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area – 20,000 new homes in total, which are much needed given the current housing crisis.
  - g. That Southwark has an impressive record of affordable housing delivery along the Old Kent Road. Of the 3,333 homes already delivered or on site there, over 50% are affordable. The Bakerloo Line Extension would enable us to deliver many more genuinely affordable homes that Southwark residents need.
  - h. The Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Extension cannot happen without more support from government. Transport for London (TfL) has succeeded in boosting passenger numbers and restoring finances after the devastating impact of the pandemic. However, as with all major transport networks, TfL will need ongoing support with capital funding to maintain the network and invest in future growth.
  - i. The Government announced a short sighted and insufficient one-year capital investment deal for TfL in December. However, this provides only £250m next year, half the £500m to £600m TfL requires annually from government to meet its capital needs.
3. Council Assembly resolves to:
- a. Continue to campaign for the Bakerloo line extension working with TfL, the Mayor of London, councils across London and our wider community
  - b. Work with the Mayor of London to continue to deliver major upgrades to the transport network in Southwark to deliver for Southwark Residents including through increased bus capacity, including a Bakerloo Bus, on the Old Kent Road.

- c. Ask the Cabinet to produce a new piece of work outlining a path to secure the necessary funding from government that would see the BLE come to fruition
- d. Ensure there is continued investment from Southwark's Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy into the Bakerloo line extension
- e. After the Mayoral election in May, call on the newly elected Mayor of London to back the Bakerloo line extension.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

**2. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR EMILY TESTER (Seconded by Councillor Victor Chamberlain)**

**A Fair Deal for Housing in Southwark**

1. Council Assembly notes the context that Southwark finds itself in:
  - a. Housing affordability in Southwark is lower than ever, with average income in Southwark barely covering the average private rent.<sup>2</sup>
  - b. The impact low affordability has on almost every part of council services. With fewer families able to afford living in Southwark, lower pupil numbers mean our schools become less viable. With pressure on supply of social housing, there are more people living in temporary accommodation.
  - c. That in 2023/2024 Southwark Council is forecast to spend £20 million on temporary accommodation, up from £5 million in 2017/2018, with 54% of those in temporary accommodation housed outside of Southwark<sup>3</sup>
  - d. That the total housing waiting list is at a record high of over 17,700 households as at January 2024, with new applicants at 11,893 up from 6,772 in 2019.<sup>4</sup>
  - e. That from 2020 to 2023, Southwark owns almost 994 fewer council homes, and the proportion of total social housing in the borough has dropped from 44% to 38% since 2010.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [Rent prices: How much have they gone up in your area? - BBC News](#); [Southwark Salary in United Kingdom - Average Salary \(talent.com\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> Internal queries to officers, DLUHC [Tables on Homelessness, Q3](#)

<sup>4</sup> Internal queries to officers, DLUHC Live Table [600](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Local Authority Registered Provider statistics](#); DLUHC Live Table [100](#)

- f. That despite the Labour administration's attempts, its 11,000 homes pledge is in disarray and seriously off track, with the former Housing Director telling Parliament that it's "unfunded".
- g. At the current rate of council housing delivery, it will take 145 years to get the waiting list to zero.<sup>6</sup>
- h. The pressure on the HRA has now resulted in the housebuilding programme being paused, including projects on Styles House, Bells Gardens, the Lindley Estate and Sceaux Gardens.
- i. That the competing priorities of delivering more homes versus maintaining and upgrading existing homes was an avoidable dilemma, according to the recently released external auditor's report on the 2021/2022 accounts.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. Council Assembly further notes

- a. That, 7 years after the Grenfell fire, cladding remains an issue in Southwark, with up to 10 blocks remaining with ACM systems yet to be remediated.<sup>8</sup>
- b. That the Council is lagging behind councils like Newham, who have successfully taken legal action against building owners who have purposefully delayed remedial work.<sup>9</sup>
- c. That damp and mould continues to be a systemic issue across Southwark, with councillors regularly getting casework on the subject from residents living in unacceptable conditions.
- d. Since the QHIP programme started, 1658 stage 1 complaints have been received, 1 in 4 projects have run over by more than 100 days, and the same proportion have overspent, with half of those being overspends of more than £100k.<sup>10</sup>
- e. The Strategic Director for Housing recently admitted that the current district heating systems are unsustainable, referring to frequent outages and issues with the system across multiple estates

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<sup>6</sup> [GLA AHP](#) statistics taking the 721 affordable homes over 6 financial years, divide current waiting list by that yearly average.

<sup>7</sup> Auditor's Annual Report, [page 7](#)

<sup>8</sup> DLUHC Building Safety Programme [Monthly Release](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Newham wins landmark legal case against building owner who delayed removing dangerous cladding – Newham Council](#)

<sup>10</sup> Internal queries to officers

- f. That the council has spent over £15 million on Maydew House, which is now being demolished, meaning 144 homes have been empty in the building since 2015.
  - g. The housing ombudsman has revealed that Southwark is the third most complained about council for housing, and has repeatedly found Southwark to have carried out “severe maladministration”, and last year forced it to pay £10,000 in compensation.
  - h. The Secretary of State, Michael Gove MP, explicitly called out Southwark Council’s record in this area, saying that he was “appalled”.
  - i. That leaseholders feel they are not getting value for money, yet are expected to pay extortionate bills, including administration fees charged as a percentage of costs as opposed to a flat fee covering staff time.
  - j. The high turnover of Housing portfolio holders in both national and local government, with there being five cabinet members in as many years at both levels with that portfolio.
  - k. That at the October Overview and Scrutiny committee (OSC), Liberal Democrat members asked for a root and branch review of the housing department, which was verbally agreed to by the cabinet member but little progress seen since.
3. Council Assembly notes with concern
- a. Residents’ trust in Southwark Council’s Housing department and response is at an all time low.
  - b. That there is a pattern of avoiding transparency and accountability within housing from members and officers.
  - c. A freedom of information request regarding the Devon Mansions Major Works programme was delayed by 2 years, prompting the Information commissioner to rule that the council was in breach of the Freedom Of Information Act
  - d. Residents were forced by this lack of communication to bring multiple major works projects to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
  - e. At these meetings, where the acting Director of Housing apologised unreservedly for the multiple failures, Labour voted against a Liberal Democrat proposal to fully hold those responsible to account

- f. That the QHIP works were signed off with commitments to regularly monitor activity and spend, which the Cabinet Member for Housing is responsible for (outlined in the Gateway 2 decisions).
  - g. This ultimately places responsibility for these failures with those cabinet members who held the housing portfolio at the time.
  - h. The following 3 QHIP works were signed off during the period when the current Leader of the Council held the housing portfolio, and responsibility for monitoring the projects were subsequently inherited by the current Deputy Cabinet Member for Allocations, and the Cabinet Member for Finance, when they held the post from 2020-2021, and 2021-2022 respectively.
    - i. Devon Mansions: Gateway signed in June 2020
    - ii. Canada Estate: Gateway signed in January 2020
    - iii. Kirby Estate: Gateway signed in May 2019
  - i. Under the tenure of the incumbent Cabinet Member for New Homes, separate issues around the viability of the Styles House redevelopment were known for months without action. Residents were then left blindsided by the decision to not replace the council homes that were demolished to make way for it.
4. Council Assembly recognises:
- a. That Labour voted down our recent proposals to create one stop shops and introduce more apprentices into the repairs work stream, which would drastically improve the quality of repairs, and trust in the council from residents.
  - b. The Liberal Democrat Group have repeatedly called for change including:
    - i. Inviting the regulator of social housing to investigate Southwark Council
    - ii. Calls for 50% of homes on council land to be genuinely affordable
    - iii. Calls for all homes to be for primary residence only
    - iv. Fully investigating and remedying unacceptable temporary accommodation conditions.
  - c. That Labour have chosen to ignore or vote down these proposals when suggested by the Liberal Democrat Group.
5. Council Assembly resolves:

- a. To fully hold to account and call on cabinet members ultimately responsible for historic and ongoing major works scandals to apologise, and consider their positions as senior decision makers.
- b. To commit to a full root and branch review of the housing and modernisation department in light of the long-running scandals highlighted at recent OSC meeting, and for the findings to be published and brought to OSC.
- c. To measure housing success on direction of travel of waiting list, rather than starts or pipeline projects, or comparisons with other boroughs that are simply building even fewer.
- d. To commit that any heating systems installed in new housing schemes are cheaper, more reliable, and more efficient than the systems found in current estates
- e. To commit to exploring ways to make leaseholder charges fairer, including flat fees on administration charges
- f. To improve accountability and trust in repairs by residents having, in writing at the first opportunity, a full record of reports, visits, actions taken, and planned next steps for each repair request or complaint, and to create more opportunities for residents to raise issues in real time and face-to-face with officers.
- g. To call on the government to provide more financial support to local authorities, especially with regards to housing
- h. To call on the government to abolish residential leasehold and cap ground rents to a nominal fee
- i. To invite Regulator of Social Housing to investigate Southwark Council at the earliest possible opportunity.
- j. To call on the GLA to support private renters by:
  - i. Establishing a “Good Developers” scheme that certifies developers that genuinely engage with and add value to local communities
  - ii. Establish a fund to support residents challenging their landlords
- k. To follow the action of Newham and take legal action against building owners who have purposefully delayed remedial work.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.



**3. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR LEO POLLAK (Seconded by Councillor Irina von Wiese)**

**Southwark Council calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza**

1. Council Assembly notes:
  - a. Our profound horror and despair at scenes that we have seen unfolding over the past five months in Israel and in Gaza.
  - b. On 7 October 2023 Hamas killed around 1,200 Israelis, and took around 240 hostages, with over 100 still being held;
  - c. Since 7 October 2023, over 30,000 Palestinians have been killed and around 1.9 million have been displaced, with Gaza now facing a severe humanitarian crisis;
  - d. That these events have led to a deeply worrying increase in antisemitism and Islamophobia across the UK.
2. Council Assembly resolves to:
  - a. Stand with the residents of our borough who have been profoundly affected by this conflict, especially those who may be fearing for the lives of their families and friends currently in the region. It is an unconscionable position for far too many.
  - b. Stand firm and united against antisemitism and Islamophobia in all its forms.
  - c. Thank community leaders across our borough for the role they are playing in reducing tensions at this sensitive and difficult time.
3. Council Assembly believes:
  - a. That there can be no excuse for the scale of this suffering, no excuse for terrorist attacks, hostage taking or the utterly disproportionate scale of civilian deaths in Gaza.
  - b. That the fighting must stop now, with an immediate ceasefire observed by all sides. All hostages released. The siege conditions in Gaza ended, with full access for the food medicines, electricity and supplies needed to end the humanitarian crisis.
  - c. That an immediate ceasefire must be accompanied by a political process with the support of the UN, that delivers a permanent end to this suffering and a just and lasting peace.

4. Council Assembly also believes:
- a. There can be no place for hate in our borough. Southwark must be a safe place for people of all faiths and nationalities. We must support people whose families and loved ones are caught up in this conflict and extend a special welcome to anyone fleeing war and persecution, in keeping with the Southwark's tradition as a borough of sanctuary.

5. Council resolves to:

- a. Work with our local Jewish, Muslim and wider community to continue to ensure antisemitism and Islamophobia are not tolerated in our borough, and to be ready to welcome refugees fleeing this conflict.
- b. Write to the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to ask the UK Government to:
  - call for an immediate bilateral ceasefire and unfettered humanitarian access to Gaza
  - work to advance a serious and concerted international effort for a two-state solution and a just and lasting peace.
  - provide safe and legal routes for refugees fleeing the region
  - request central government funding to support community cohesion at a local level.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

**4. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR RACHEL BENTLEY (Seconded by Councillor Nick Johnson)**

**Protecting Play Spaces in Southwark**

1. Council assembly notes
  - a. Access to outdoor play is fundamental to the physical, social, mental and emotional development of children.
  - b. Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that Governments must "respect, protect and fulfil" the "right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities".
  - c. The UK is currently failing in that duty, with children suffering damage to their mental health and wellbeing due to the lack of

accessible play spaces.

- d. The impact of Covid lockdowns on the mental health of young people is yet to be fully understood but it is a clear that we must provide every opportunity for the affected generation to play and develop socially.
  - e. The disastrous cuts to local government funding implemented by the Conservative Government have left playgrounds falling into disrepair across the UK.
  - f. Councils in London have failed to prioritise the provision of accessible play spaces when granting planning permission to new developments.
2. Council assembly notes with concern:
- a. Too many play spaces in Southwark are in an appalling state.
  - b. Play areas across the borough have been neglected, with missing, damaged or unsafe equipment rendering them inaccessible for local communities.
  - c. Three playgrounds in Bermondsey, on the Kirby Estate, the Rouel Road Estate and the Abbeyfield Estate, were voted amongst the 'saddest' play areas in London, with local children describing them as "nasty" and "lonely".
  - d. Some communities have been left without any play space at all. The playground on the Bells Gardens estate was bulldozed as part of an infill development which the council has since run out of money to complete.
  - e. Developers have consistently failed to provide adequate play spaces on new residential developments, and some have even attempted to ban children from playing outside in shared spaces.
  - f. Where well maintained play spaces do exist, Southwark communities are finding them hard to access. Following the refurbishment of Mint Street adventure playground, residents and community groups say they have not been able to access the space freely and easily.
3. Council assembly resolves to:
- a. Conduct an audit of all council maintained play spaces to identify all equipment defects, safety concerns and required improvements, starting with the 3 playgrounds voted amongst London's 'saddest'.

- b. Conduct an audit of play spaces that have been a condition of planning permission, included whether they have been provided for or built at all.
- c. Update Southwark's applicable strategies to develop and implement a cross-departmental 'Southwark Play Strategy' with the aim of delivering safe, well maintained, accessible play spaces for all communities in Southwark. The strategy must include a clear timeframe for action.
- d. Hold developers to account in fulfilling commitments to provide play spaces on new developments in Southwark.
- e. Work with residents and community groups to improve access to Mint Street Adventure playground.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

**5. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE (Seconded by Councillor Adam Hood)**

**Improving Inclusivity for People with Dyslexia**

1. Council assembly notes:
  - a. The council has a duty to ensure all services and materials are accessible to everyone.
  - b. Dyslexia is a protected characteristic covered by the Equality Act 2010.
  - c. Southwark's current house style for written communications and reports does not adhere to the British Dyslexia Society's dyslexia friendly style guide.
  - d. Southwark Council, therefore, runs the risk of excluding people with dyslexia from accessing services or participating in local decision-making.
  - e. The Southwark Liberal Democrats asked the council to commit to implementing the dyslexia friendly house style in March 2023.
2. Council assembly resolves to:
  - a. Immediately implement a house style in line with the 'dyslexia friendly style guide' as outlined by the British Dyslexia Society.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Member Motions	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Constitutional Team <a href="mailto:Constitutional.Team@southwark.gov.uk">Constitutional.Team@southwark.gov.uk</a>

## AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
Version	Final
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