

Meeting Name:	Council Assembly
Date:	17 July 2024
Report title:	Members' Question Time
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/A
From:	Proper Constitutional Officer

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Members' question time shall not exceed 30 minutes. During this time, members may not question any one cabinet member or committee chair for longer than fifteen minutes. Members are limited to one question at each meeting.

Questions to the leader will be taken first, followed by questions to other cabinet members. The order in which the different political groups ask questions of the leader will be rotated. Questions to cabinet members will also be rotated by group.

Cabinet members and committee chairs have discretion to refer a question to another cabinet member.

Responses to members' questions will be circulated on the evening of the meeting.

The Mayor will ask the member asking the question if they wish to ask one supplemental question to the member to whom the question was asked. The supplemental question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. Therefore, supplemental questions to the leader or other cabinet members are not free ranging.

No question shall be asked on a matter concerning a planning or licensing application.

Notes:

1. The procedures on members' questions are set out in council assembly procedure rule 2.9 in the Southwark Constitution.
2. In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.9 (13) (prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the order in which questions to the leader appear in this report may not necessarily be the order in which they are considered at the meeting.

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR JASON OCHERE

Can the Leader provide an update on the progress being made in improving our repairs service?

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WATSON

The Leader told us in November that we should expect proposals on local community infrastructure levy (CIL) allocations in the spring, yet none have emerged. With millions of pounds of this funding sitting in the Council's bank account and many community projects in desperate need of support, these needless delays are negatively impacting our residents and communities. When can we expect to see the local CIL allocation proposals and can the cabinet member confirm that funding will be allocated to projects in the wards it was created, in line with what local community groups and charities are asking?

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD

Can the Leader give an update on Southwark 2030 and what a new government means for the borough's ambitions?

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN

In June, the council referred itself to the Regulator of Social Housing due to its failure to conduct electrical safety tests. Once again, council tenants have been seriously let down. With the Grenfell Tower disaster having been started by an electrical fire, residents are understandably very anxious about what this means for them and their families. How long has the council known it has not been following best practice in conducting electrical safety tests and why was the referral not made sooner?

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR RENATA HAMVAS

With tightening budgets due to central government cuts to councils, we need to find new, innovative ways of funding our drive toward Net Zero. One such initiative is the Southwark Green Investment Fund. Could the Leader provide an update on the first round of fundraising and the next steps for the fund?

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR EMILY TESTER

At the budget, the council unanimously endorsed the creation of a Pride Fund, which was a very welcome step forward in supporting our thriving LGBTQ+ communities in Southwark. But the process has been met by local LGBTQ+ organisations with disappointment and frustration. The funds were too small

and confirmed far too late to allow proper planning – just 24 hours before Pride month began, and didn't even support the official Pride in Southwark event. Will the Cabinet Member commit to taking these lessons on board next year to ensure that the fund genuinely matches its purpose?

7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR SAM DALTON

Can the Leader confirm that the new zebra crossing on Long Lane and part-closure of Wild's Rents, called for by local residents and councillors in London Bridge and West Bermondsey and Chaucer wards to improve pedestrian safety and reduce traffic, will go ahead later this year?

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR NICK JOHNSON

The affordable housing monitor tracking actual affordable houses versus S.106 obligations has not been updated since 2022, with the last audit supposedly occurring last March. As of 2022, at least 14 developments did not meet the agreed S.106 provision of either affordable, socially rented, or intermediate units. Can the cabinet member provide an update on the missing information and when we can expect to see the latest audit, and what enforcement action has been taken against those that have not met their S.106 obligations?

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ESME DOBSON

The Council recently completed 12 brand new council homes on Nunhead Lane, as part of continued delivery in the borough. Can the Leader outline how the council plans to continue to build good council homes for our residents?

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR IRINA VON WIESE

Last year we raised the issue of the council imposing tennis coaching from the National Tennis Association on all parks in Southwark, overriding long standing local tennis coaches in the process. Many coaches were subsequently folded into the new arrangement under this provider, but we have now learned that at least one long standing coach is now barred from coaching tennis in any park in Southwark, despite support from parents and guardians. Does the council stand by its statement from last year that this has been "fair and transparent"?

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR KATH WHITTAM

Could the Leader update us on the council's progress in reaching 100,000 trees in the borough?

12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

With support from both parties, the Green Finance initiative launched to great success, with the target £1 million raised well before the initial deadline. With clear appetite for this sort of investment, will the council consider expanding its ambitions to raise even more vital funds to tackle the climate emergency beyond the initial £6 million target?

13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR REGGIE POPOOLA

Last week we celebrated an amazing 20 years of Southwark Works. Could the Leader update us on how the occasion was marked and on Southwark's plans for the future?

14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR RACHEL BENTLEY

At the November council assembly, the leader committed to looking into the issues of security doors at Bradley House. Despite repeated requests there are still issues with the doors. Did he look into it and do nothing, or did he not look into it at all?

15. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND REFUGEES FROM COUNCILLOR MARGY NEWENS

What update can the cabinet member give on Southwark's ambitions to become a Borough of Sanctuary?

16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, DEMOCRACY AND FINANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JOSEPH VAMBE

Last month we celebrated Pride Month. Could the Cabinet Member for Equalities, Democracy and Finance update us on what events took place in Southwark and how we are celebrating our LGBTQ+ Community?

17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR CASSANDRA BROWN

Recently residents have reported issues with antisocial behaviour on the Longfield Estate. How is the cabinet member working with residents and the police to tackle this issue?

18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS AND BUSINESS FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HOOD

The shops at Crossthwaite Avenue are facing extraordinary rent hikes. It is shocking that the council is not protecting exactly the type of small local businesses that deserve to thrive. The lack of engagement from senior officials and councillors responsible in a transparent discussion with the shopkeepers has led to outrage in the local community, with over 25,000 signatures to the petition to date. The issue has clearly exposed problems with the council's

attitude towards small business and the consequences of its outsourced operations. Will the council work to resolve the situation by ensuring that rent increases are index linked to inflation only, and reviewing the currently outsourced arrangement for managing commercial lettings to ensure that policies for supporting local businesses are embedded into practice?

19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR NEW HOMES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH MCCALLUM

Will the council provide an update on the progress of all council 'infill' developments throughout the borough?

For each development on an existing estate, can the council provide the following information:

- The current stage of construction (i.e. planning submitted/granted, contractors appointed, hoardings erected, demolition/ground works completed, building frame started, external works completed, or properties occupied, etc)
- The projected completion date and number of new homes provided (split by affordable and not affordable) upon completion.

20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON

Could the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing update on any progress made by the maternity commission?

21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, PARKS AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM COUNCILLOR MAGGIE BROWNING

Can the cabinet member tell me what steps are being taken to ensure Peckham Rye Park is being protected during GALA festival and after the event is finished?

22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR NEW HOMES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the proposed Bakerloo Line upgrade and expansion, following public events at The UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiF) in May?

23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN AIR, STREETS AND WASTE FROM COUNCILLOR JANE SALMON

The problems we are seeing on Lower Road are partly due to the coincidence with other projects needing to restrict traffic flow, including Thames Water maintenance and improvement works. On Lower Road and across the borough there is an increasing sense that water maintenance works are poorly planned and take far too long. Whilst the council does have limited powers to penalise

over-running works, what more can the council do to ensure that disruption from these projects are minimised before spades hit the ground?

24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL

Public consumption of illegal drugs is becoming an increasing issue in St George's and across the borough, representing a problem both for residents having to deal with needles, other drug paraphernalia and increasing anti-social behaviour, but also of course for those trapped in addiction. The systems currently in place are clearly not sufficient to deal with this problem. What more will the council do to ensure that the Southwark anti-social behaviour unit (SASBU) are able to properly target their resources on known hotspots, and help those dealing with addiction get the help they need?

25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR BARRIE HARGROVE

Can the cabinet member explain the way by which leaseholder charges are calculated on district heating systems?

26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS AND BUSINESS FROM COUNCILLOR YUCEF HASSAINE

Could the Lead Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs and Business update me on Southwark's Climate Action Day, which took place last month?