Item No.	Classification:	Date:	Meeting Name:
7.1	Open	20 October 2010	Council Assembly
Report title:		Report back on motions referred to cabinet from council assembly	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Cabinet	

MOTION FROM MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 2.9 (6) – SOUTHWARK'S RESPONSE TO THE EMERGENCY BUDGET

Cabinet on 21 September 2010 considered the following motion referred from council assembly on 14 July 2010 which had been moved by Councillor Peter John, seconded by Councillor Victoria Mills and subsequently amended.

1. That council assembly notes the unprecedented, game-changing cuts that government is making to public sector spending. It notes that local government will not be protected from those cuts and that, while we will know more after the comprehensive spending review in October, the council will face upwards of a 25% reduction in funding over the next five years.

2. That council assembly notes that the poorest Southwark residents and families will be hit hardest personally by the budget, with significant changes to:

    - Housing benefits
    - Tax credits
    - Child benefits
    - Disability Living Allowance

3. That it further notes the 2.5% increase in VAT, which as a deeply regressive tax will hit the poorest hardest, and will more than swallow up any savings Southwark residents make through changes to the income tax personal allowance and council tax freeze.

4. That council assembly notes the increase in VAT will lead to higher prices for goods and services; will have a disproportionate impact on pensioners and other low income groups; and will have a severe impact on businesses, charities and community groups in Southwark. It further notes the disproportionate effect of the budget on women and the disabled.

5. That council assembly notes the effect of the increase in VAT, when taken with other measures in the budget, will be unfair to pensioners, who have not had a compensatory increase in other benefits and allowances.

6. That council assembly notes that the way the VAT increase will affect pensioners and other low income groups runs counter to the Government's Coalition Agreement statement on 20 May 2010 that it would "ensure that fairness is at the heart of those decisions so that all those most in need are protected."

7. That council assembly notes the Institute of Fiscal Studies has stated the VAT increase was not "unavoidable," as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in his budget speech."

8. That council assembly notes that these changes will take place at a time of rising unemployment and that the Office of Budget Responsibility's figures show that the actions in the budget itself will lead to weaker employment growth and more serious unemployment levels.

9. That council assembly notes that the cabinet has already committed to cutting waste and making efficiency savings, but that they will not be enough to prevent loss of services. It believes that the council will have to change the way it works by being innovative if we are to both continue delivering for Southwark residents and also try to meet the greater needs that the welfare reforms, VAT changes and persistent unemployment will cause in the community.

10. That council assembly further believes that meeting this challenge will require greater cooperation between the council, its neighbours, residents, businesses, local trade unions and stakeholders. It believes that the council's response will be stronger if local consensus can be achieved between the local parties wherever possible and resolves to go forward on that basis.

11. That council assembly therefore resolves to call on cabinet to open up the council's budget making process by finding innovative ways of involving residents in the tough choices that lie ahead and being honest with them about the scale of the challenge.

12. That council assembly resolves to call on the leader to write directly to the Chancellor of the Exchequer raising concerns about the impact of the proposed VAT increase on pensioners, other vulnerable groups and businesses in Southwark.

13. That council assembly resolves to call on the cabinet to write to members of parliament representing Southwark, asking that they stand up for Southwark's pensioners, businesses and wider community, to voice their opposition to this unfair increase in VAT.

Cabinet agreed the motion. The leader reported at the meeting that he had written to Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government inviting him to Southwark. He had received a response advising him that Mr Pickles would not be able to attend due to diary pressures and the leader had subsequently offered to go to Mr Pickles' office in White Hall.

At the meeting on 21 September 2010 cabinet agreed budget principles to direct decision making through the coming budget making process.

MOTION FROM MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 2.9 (6) – PUBLICATION OF SPENDING ON GOODS AND SERVICES OVER £500

Cabinet on 21 September 2010 considered the following motion referred from council assembly on 14 July 2010 which had been moved by Councillor Lewis Robinson and seconded by Councillor Toby Eckersley.

1. That council assembly notes the cabinet resolution of 15 June 2010 in which it states it will "Open up the budget making process for public scrutiny so we make better decisions."

2. That in light of this commitment to the residents of Southwark, council assembly requests the cabinet to bring forward proposals, as requested by the secretary of state for communities and local government to make details of spending on all goods and services over £500 for the public to see and scrutinise.

3. That council assembly believes that local people should be able to hold politicians and public bodies to account over how their hard earned cash is being spent, and welcomes these proposals, following the coalition government's own commitment demonstrated by the online publication of the COINS database, and urges the cabinet to follow this example.

4. That council assembly notes that by September, councils will be expected to make these details available and should be doing this as a matter of course by the start of next year and request the cabinet to take the appropriate steps to meet this deadline.

Cabinet agreed the motion. It was reported at the meeting that the details of spending on all goods and services over £500.00 (with the exception of information on salaries, transfer payments e.g housing benefit payments and other payments which are not related to supplies and services) would be available on the council website by the end of September.

MOTION FROM MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 2.9 (6) – SOUTHWARK PARK AND THE OLYMPICS

Cabinet on 21 September 2010 considered the following motion referred from council assembly on 14 July 2010 which had been moved by Councillor Columba Blango and seconded by Councillor Wilma Nelson.

1. That council assembly notes the quashing of the council’s planning permission for the refurbishment of the sports and athletics facilities at Southwark Park.

2. That council assembly notes the public statement of ‘disappointment’ by the leader at this setback, and that securing an Olympic legacy for Southwark remains a priority for the council.

3. That council assembly calls on the cabinet member for culture, leisure, sport and the Olympics to make all efforts to make a decision on the submission of a new application to allow the possibility of the project being delivered in time for the Olympics.

Cabinet agreed the motion and noted the comments of the strategic director of environment and housing.

MOTION FROM MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 2.9 (6) – SOUTHWARK CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Cabinet on 21 September 2010 considered the following motion referred from council assembly on 14 July 2010 which had been moved by Councillor Anood Al-Samerai, seconded by Councillor Paul Noblet and subsequently amended.

1. That council assembly notes that in the budget on Tuesday 22 June, the Chancellor of the Exchequer specifically excluded capital spending from budget reductions and said he wished to focus on capital "projects with a significant economic return to the country".

2. That council assembly believes that this announcement allows Southwark to make progress on delivering a variety of capital projects that will bring significant economic benefits to the borough and more widely across London. By continuing to invest in major capital schemes the council will ensure the borough's residents have access to affordable housing, libraries, leisure centres, schools and sporting and youth facilities fit for the 21st century.

3. That council assembly supports the new administration's view that the capital programme is of such strategic importance that it should be discussed and approved by the full council assembly.

4. That council assembly therefore also supports the proposal set out in item 5.2 (the report on constitutional changes) of this meeting's agenda that the cabinet submit the capital programme to council assembly for their approval once every four years and requests that cabinet submit a revised programme to council assembly for approval during 2010.

5. That council assembly notes that the current capital programme, agreed on 9 February by the previous administration, made no commitment to fund refurbishment work of Seven Islands leisure centre. Instead it asked that the finance director provide more detailed options analysis and financial appraisals on the remaining bids received (including Seven Islands) for future consideration by the executive in the context of resources available and considering any additional resources which can be identified. The total costs for these bids totaled £115m, against a budget of £55.5m available.

6. That, however, council assembly also recognises the importance of Seven Islands leisure centre to a significant proportion of the borough and therefore asks the cabinet to consider carefully how its refurbishment could be funded through the capital programme.

7. That council assembly notes the report to the regeneration and leisure scrutiny sub-committee on 29 June identified that the Canada Water library will cost a further £0.5 million more than has been agreed in the capital programme as a result of the over-running of the construction phase of this project. Council assembly therefore asks cabinet to agree to this additional expenditure over and above the level of the commitment made by the previous administration so that this work can be completed.

8. That council assembly believes it is important that the capital programme demonstrates investment in all areas of the borough and not just one community council area. It therefore calls on cabinet to consider the needs of the whole borough in its revision of the capital programme before submitting it for approval to council assembly.

Cabinet agreed the motion. It was reported at the meeting that the capital programme would be discussed by council assembly at the December meeting.

MOTION FROM MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 2.9 (6) – NURSERY ROW PARK

Cabinet on 21 September 2010 considered the following motion referred from council assembly on 14 July 2010 which had been moved by Councillor Martin Seaton and seconded by Councillor Helen Morrissey.

1. That Nursery Row Park is currently protected as an open space and a site of importance for nature conservation under the category other open space in the Southwark Plan. Open spaces provide an essential amenity and recreational resource for people living and working in Southwark.

2. That council assembly notes that at council assembly on 4 November 2009 a decision on which sites to save from the Southwark Plan was taken and three sites on Nursery Row Park (including Sites 52P and 53P) were all saved for housing.

3. That council assembly also notes that sites 52P and 53P are no longer part of the development programme for the Elephant and Castle, therefore they are no longer contributing to delivery of the council's housing targets. It is also noted that the council owns the sites.

4. That council assembly therefore requests the cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy to write to the Secretary of State inviting him to revise the council's request to save council's housing sites by omitting sites 52P and 53P.

5. That council assembly notes that at this stage it is only possible to save or not save policies from the Southwark Plan and it is therefore not possible to amend the boundary of site 51P that also covers the Stead Street car park which is required for housing. Council assembly notes the commitment given by the cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy that the council will not build on any part of the park and calls on the cabinet member to take steps to provide additional planning policy protection to this remaining part of the park at the earliest possible opportunity.

Cabinet noted the motion and also noted that the cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy has written to the Secretary of State, who has now directed that sites 52P and 53P should not be saved as housing sites.

Cabinet welcomed the proposed open spaces development plan document and agreed that the whole of Nursery Row Park should be given planning policy protection at the earliest possible opportunity.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet agenda and minutes – 21 September 2010	Constitutional Team, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TZ	Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager
Report Author	Everton Roberts, Constitutional Officer
Version	Final
Dated	7 October 2010
Key Decision?	No

CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	**Comments Sought**	**Comments included**
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional / Community Council / Scrutiny Team		7 October 2010