

Item No. 16.	Classification: Open	Date: 19 March 2013	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Motions Referred from Council Assembly – 23 January 2013	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Council Assembly	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the cabinet considers the motions set out in the appendices attached to the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Council assembly at its meeting on Wednesday 23 January 2013 agreed several motions and these stand referred to the cabinet for consideration.
3. The cabinet is requested to consider the motions referred to it. Any proposals in a motion are treated as a recommendation only. The final decisions of the cabinet will be reported back to the next meeting of council assembly. When considering a motion, cabinet can decide to:
 - Note the motion; *or*
 - Agree the motion in its entirety, *or*
 - Amend the motion; *or*
 - Reject the motion.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.10(6), the attached motions were referred to the cabinet. The cabinet will report on the outcome of its deliberations upon the motions to a subsequent meeting of council assembly.
5. The constitution allocates responsibility for particular functions to council assembly, including approving the budget and policy framework, and to the cabinet for developing and implementing the budget and policy framework and overseeing the running of council services on a day-to-day basis.
6. Any key issues, such as policy, community impact or funding implications are included in the advice from the relevant chief officer.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Council agenda 23 January 2013: This document is available on this web page: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=4240&Ver=4	Report on the council's web site	Lesley John Constitutional Team 020 525 7228

LIST OF APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Genuinely affordable council housing for Southwark
Appendix 2	Major works and housing repairs
Appendix 3	Save Southwark emergency services
Appendix 4	DNA database

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager	
Report Author	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	7 March 2013	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Chief Executive	Yes	No
Strategic Director Housing and Community Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure	Yes	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	7 March 2013	

GENUINELY AFFORDABLE COUNCIL HOUSING FOR SOUTHWARK

At council assembly on Wednesday 23 January 2013 a motion entitled 'genuinely affordable council housing for Southwark' was moved by Councillor Rebecca Lury and seconded by Councillor Darren Merrill. The motion was agreed and stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly welcomes the fact that the current Labour administration is:
 - Investing £326 million to ensure every council home in Southwark is warm, dry and safe by 2016
 - Building 1000 new council homes in Southwark over the next eight years - more than have been built in all of London in the last 10 years
 - Engaging in a borough-wide consultation into the proposals put forward by Southwark's groundbreaking independent housing commission which explored future housing options for strategy over the next 30 years
 - And rejecting the government's definition of affordable housing as up to 80% market rents, by ensuring rents on phase 1 of the Heygate were lowered from 65% to 50% market rents to reflect the wishes of local residents.
2. That council assembly regrets the complete failure of the previous administration when it came to housing, including:
 - No new council homes approved between 2002-2010
 - An unworkable and unfunded decent homes programme which was millions of pounds over budget and left many Southwark residents without decent homes.
 - 7,800 fewer council homes in Southwark by the end of their time in office.
3. That council assembly believes the Tory Liberal Democrat government's housing policy is not geared towards providing more affordable and social housing and opposes:
 - The housing benefit cap
 - "Affordable rent" of up to 80% of market rent
 - The ending of secure tenancies
 - The slashing of the social housing budget by £3.9 billion

- The Growth and Infrastructure Bill which allows developers to deliver 0% affordable housing on new developments
 - Right to buy discounts of up to £75,000.
4. That council assembly notes that Simon Hughes MP and the Liberal Democrats have supported all of these measures.
 5. That council assembly notes that sites for the first phase of the council's 1000 new homes have already been identified throughout the borough and calls on cabinet to draw up plans for consultation on the next phase of new council homes.

MAJOR WORKS AND HOUSING REPAIRS

At council assembly on Wednesday 23 January 2013 a motion entitled ‘major works and housing repairs’ was moved by Councillor Anood Al-Samerai and seconded by Councillor Catherine Bowman. The motion was subsequently amended and the amended motion stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly regrets the incident at Draper House and notes that the council is doing everything in its power to ensure people feel safe in their homes. It notes that:
 - An investigation was immediately begun into the cause of the incident and that the council has agreed to fully adopt any recommendations to ensure residents' safety
 - Properties where similar work was carried out are undergoing inspection by the council's compliance team to ensure work has been done properly and to the required safety standards
 - The council has also alerted the health and safety executive as safety is its top priority.
2. That council assembly notes that at Four Squares the project has been completely turned round. The uncertainty for residents caused by the previous Liberal Democrat administration's failed housing investment programme and failure to complete security works has now been replaced with certainty as the works start driving forward the £26 million investment on the estate. The cabinet member for housing and council officers have met regularly with residents throughout the process and the first of the packaged works is now being delivered on time, despite some unforeseen structural issues.
3. That council assembly welcomes the steps taken by the current administration to improve major works project management and performance it inherited from the Liberal Democrats, including:
 - Labour's £326 million warm dry safe programme which is realistic, fully-costed and sets out a clear timetable so residents know exactly when their works will take place
 - A substantial programme of fire risk assessment works, refurbishment of hostels and a programme of improvement to tenants and residents association halls - with 2013/14 individual heating programme brought forward into 2012/13, meaning inefficient boilers are being replaced with more efficient models helping to deliver savings for resident and tackle fuel poverty
 - The restructure and the setting up of project management teams to give improved focus to project management on site and a more open and transparent culture where problems can be quickly identified and resources committed accordingly

- A comprehensive resident consultation process “Putting Residents First” which ensures the council is clear with residents from the outset about what we are delivering and how they can be involved.
4. That council assembly notes the good progress has been made in improving the repairs service but acknowledges that the service started from a low base thanks to the arrangements put in place by the previous Liberal Democrat administration. It notes that contracts have been terminated with Just Housing, Morrison and the council is a few months away from bringing the call centre in-house. It notes that overall contract management is improving. There is a greater focus on completing repairs quickly and to a high standard leading to reduced costs and a reduction in duplication. Repairs completed right first time is improving as is satisfaction with the repairs service. Complaint escalations are at an all time low as are the number of overdue orders.
 5. That council assembly notes that the telephone answering performance at the customer services centre (CSC) for repairs was poor in the last quarter of 2012. This is because the repairs contractor for the south of the borough changed which caused some disruption and resulted in an increase in demand for the telephone service that lasted longer than we predicted. It notes that the council provided further resources and call waiting times have reduced considerably in the first two weeks of 2013. It notes that a customer access strategy has been developed to improve the quality of customer services, ease of accessibility and reduce costs and that the new My Southwark, customer service point opened at The Blue in Bermondsey in mid December and represents the prototype for the future of face to face customer services in Southwark.
 6. That council assembly believes an immediate review of major works will be to the detriment of tenants with regards to their works and upgrades being completed on time and would result in severe costs to leaseholders.
 7. That council assembly therefore resolves on cabinet to:
 - Continue to deliver its £326 million housing investment programme which will make every council home in Southwark warm, dry and safe by 2016
 - Continue to improve management of major works contracts and to develop its customer access strategy which will help to improve the quality of the council’s customer services.

Comments of the Strategic Director of Housing and Community Services

Draper House

- (1) The settlement agreement with Breyer for the mutual termination of the 5 year partnering contract is very close to finalisation and is currently going through the council's process of internal approvals.
- (2) Officers attended the overview and scrutiny committee and gave a verbal update on the 4 February 2013. At the meeting it was agreed that a report would be submitted for the sub-committee on the 25 February 2013.
- (3) The next steps will be to consult with residents around two options to complete the major works programme, either to use a back-up contractor who will be able to start work quickly or to repackage the works and retender. The latter course of action would be subject to EU procurement regulations and would take at least 9 months.

Four Squares

- (4) The internal refurbishment works for council tenanted flats is currently ongoing (commenced 7 January 2013) and is programmed for completion by end of February 2014.
- (5) The main external refurbishment works are currently in design with open days recently held to showcase window designs and stair tower designs. The next project team meeting on 12 February 2013 will be devoted to discussion and agreement of roof designs which will facilitate a planning application before the end of February 2013. Whilst the planning process runs its statutory course we will finalise pricing of the main externals and should be consulting leaseholders formally via the home ownership unit during April/May 2013 with a view to commencing works in the summer of 2013 and completion around March 2015.
- (6) The lift refurbishment works at Layard Square will be let on 11 February 2013 with a start date April 2013 and a completion date of autumn 2013.
- (7) Security works at Marden Square are programmed to commence in April 2013. The formal leasehold consultation for this project is underway and due to end around 18 February.
- (8) Security works at Layard Square have been designed, however, commencement on site is subject to completion of the new lift car at Layard Square and therefore the current programmed start date for this work is August 2013 which should see completion by the end of March 2014.

Repairs

- (9) The repairs contractor for the south of the borough changed from Morrison to Mears at the beginning of October 2012. It was inevitable that this would cause some disruption to service delivery and result in an increase in demand for the telephone service. The council supported the customer service centre (CSC) with an injection of additional resources to deal with the anticipated short term additional demand.
- (10) Telephone answering performance at the CSC for repairs was poor in the last quarter of 2012. Performance for all other services, environmental services, switchboard, revenues and benefits was good.
- (11) The predicted increase in call volumes came, but continued for the remainder of the year; longer than predicted. Further resources have been provided to the CSC along with council support and the co-location of repairs contractor staff to provide an immediate response to customers calling with outstanding repairs enquiries.
- (12) These initiatives are having the desired effect. Call waiting times have reduced considerably and the proportion of calls answered has exceeded 80%, the target, on almost every week day since Christmas 2012. Officers will continue to work with GDIT/Vangent for the remainder of the contract to maintain and improve service delivery. The contract with GDIT/Vangent is ceasing on 31 May 2013 and the council will be taking responsibility for the delivery of customer services immediately after that. The procurement of the long-term repairs service for the south of the borough is ongoing with contract award to a new provider expected in the spring of 2013.

Customer Service

- (13) A review of the delivery of face to face service will take place this year. The One Stop Shops will be rebranded 'My Southwark' customer service points, to reinforce the strength and popularity of the My Southwark personal account. The council launched the My Southwark personal account in 2012, which gives customers easy, personalised access to a host of on-line services and information. More than 26,000 customers have signed up for the My Southwark account and are enjoying the benefits of the service. There are plans to deliver many more services through My Southwark in 2013 and beyond. A customer access strategy has been developed to improve the quality of customer services, ease of accessibility and reduce costs.
- (14) The new My Southwark, customer service point opened at The Blue in Bermondsey in mid December. The new service replaces the Bermondsey One Stop Shop which closed in December following the sale of the site on which it sat. The new service at The Blue has been well received by customers and promotes customer self service and assisted self service. It also supports the local economy of The Blue. The new customer service point is the prototype for the future of face to face customer services in Southwark.

SAVE SOUTHWARK EMERGENCY SERVICES

At council assembly on Wednesday 13 January 2013 a motion entitled 'save Southwark emergency services' was proposed by Councillor Peter John and seconded by Councillor Richard Livingstone. The motion was subsequently amended and the amended motion stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly believes that the safety and security of Londoners and the residents of our borough is being put at risk as a result of cuts to emergency services being pushed through by the Mayor of London and the Tory Liberal Democrat government to our key emergency services – the Metropolitan Police Service, the London Fire Brigade alongside the London Ambulance Service and the city's accident and emergency departments.
2. That council assembly believes that the cuts are going too far and too fast and that the many millions of pounds being cut from the budgets of the NHS, the Metropolitan Police Service and the London Fire Brigade will inevitably endanger families and communities across the capital.
3. That council assembly believes that the cuts are being carried out without consideration of the impact on Londoners' safety. The mooted closures of police front desks in Rotherhithe and East Dulwich, fire stations in Borough and Peckham and Lewisham A & E department will mean various pockets of London could see the safety of residents threatened by longer response times.
4. That council assembly rejects the position of the Mayor of London and of Simon Hughes MP that the scale of the cuts are necessary and acceptable and calls on both to stand up for Southwark residents against the cuts being imposed by the Tory Liberal Democrat government to the emergency services on which we rely to keep Londoners safe.
5. That council assembly notes that since the substantive motion was drafted the Mayor has published his draft police and crime strategy for London, and that this document makes a number of recommendations which will have serious consequences for Southwark if they are implemented:
 - (a) The proposed closure of East Dulwich, Gipsy Hill and Sydenham police stations, which will leave a 'black hole' in counter service provision for the residents of College, Village and East Dulwich wards.
 - (b) The proposed closure of Rotherhithe police station, which will leave an isolated peninsula community without adequate access to dedicated police resources.
 - (c) The proposed dismantling of the neighbourhood policing model such that the current dedicated ward based teams of six staff members (one sergeant, three police constables and two police community support officers) will be reduced to one dedicated police constable plus a 'named sergeant'.

6. That council assembly notes the Mayor's election manifesto commitment not to close any police station facility without opening an 'equivalent or better' facility in the same area, and notes that the draft police and crime strategy breaks this pledge.
7. That council assembly deplores the lack of cross-borough co-ordination in planning police station closures which has resulted in the 'black hole' in counter service provision in the Dulwich and Crystal Palace areas, which are close to the boundary with four other London boroughs.
8. That council assembly further deplores the dismantling of the neighbourhood policing model which will see the majority of officers deployed to high crime areas, to the detriment of the very important and successful community liaison and crime prevention roles which have helped to keep crime low.
9. That council assembly records its grave concern at the impact of both police station closures and the dismantling of the neighbourhood policing model on vulnerable residents, victims of domestic violence and others for whom the local police station is a place of safety; and on the ability of the police to record crime statistics accurately. Further, council assembly is concerned at the impact of police station closures on the management of local police teams and the potential for valuable police time to be lost to wards in the south of the borough due to officer travel time from operational bases in the north of the borough.
10. That whilst council assembly acknowledges the need to make budget savings, it believes the 20% cut imposed by the Tory Liberal Democrat government goes too far and too fast. In addition whilst council assembly recognises the inappropriateness of some current police station buildings for on-going use, for example the current East Dulwich police station building, it is extremely concerning that the draft police and crime plan contains no proposals for alternative provision, no definition of 'equal or better' against which future performance can be measured, and no creative thinking. Council assembly requests that the cabinet calls upon the Mayor to honour his manifesto commitment concerning police counter facilities, and to rethink the proposals for the south of the borough and for Rotherhithe, working creatively with the council and local communities, to ensure that the dangerous 'black hole' scenario is averted.
11. That council assembly recognises the council's commitment to working creatively with the Metropolitan Police in identifying alternative premises which have the potential to meet police security criteria in the south of the borough and in Rotherhithe.

DNA DATABASE

At council assembly on Wednesday 23 January 2013 a motion entitled 'DNA database' was proposed by Councillor Graham Neale and seconded by Councillor Rosie Shimell. The motion was subsequently amended and the amended motion stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That council notes that in a fair society it is simply not right that innocent people can have their DNA stored by the state.
2. That council also notes with concern that since 2004 the UK's national DNA database (NDNAD) has been permitted to hold DNA samples of any individual arrested of an offence, regardless of whether that individual was actually charged or convicted.
3. That council notes that over million people, who have never been given a conviction, caution or formal warning are estimated to be on the national DNA database and acknowledges that the European Court of Human Rights found indefinite DNA retention to be in violation of Article 8.
4. That while council recognises that DNA evidence can be an important tool in criminal investigations, council believes that the indefinite retention of the DNA of innocent people constitutes a disproportionate intrusion by the state.
5. That council assembly notes the announcement that DNA samples held for innocent people will be destroyed in four months time in May 2013 and supports the Metropolitan Police Service's early deletion request scheme.
6. That in particular, council urges council officers to provide a link to the early deletion request scheme on Southwark Council's website and highlight the scheme in the next edition of Southwark Life.