

Item No. 19.	Classification: Open	Date: 17 September 2013	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Motion Referred from Council Assembly	
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 10 July 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 10 July 2013 http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=4574&Ver=4	Report on the council's website	Lesley John Constitutional Team 020 7525 7228

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AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer	
Report Author	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	5 September 2013	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Chief Executive	Yes	No
Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Housing and Community Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	5 September 2013	

Welfare Reform

At council assembly on Wednesday 10 July 2013 a motion entitled 'Welfare Reform' was moved by Councillor Neil Coyle and seconded by Councillor Cleo Soanes. The motion was agreed and stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

That council assembly:

1. Is gravely concerned by the impact the Tory Liberal Democrat government's welfare reforms is having on Southwark's most vulnerable residents.
2. Notes that more than 10% of Southwark's population are affected by the range of welfare cuts. More than 4,000 by the bedroom tax, over 24,000 by the government's £2.8m council tax benefit cut (including over 16,000 who are in work), thousands by changes to DLA beginning this year and hundreds more by the benefit cap from later this year.
3. Notes that local advice and support organisations are seeing a steep rise in demand for help. Over 500 people were fed by foodbanks in Southwark in April alone (compared with 100 in April 2012) and the provider estimates 30 tons of food will need to be distributed to meet demand this year. 10% of the recipients are in work. Southwark's Citizen Advice Bureaux saw a 40% jump in demand for help this year but legal aid cuts mean the loss of the equivalent of 4 full time advisors across Southwark Legal Advice Network.
4. Notes the action taken by the council to deal with these changes including:
 - Labour's £800,000 Hardship Fund; £400k of which is targeted towards local disabled people and carers
 - An extra £400,000 went into helping people downsize homes to avoid the bedroom tax
 - The Social Fund replacement scheme (the Southwark Emergency Support Scheme)
 - More than 700 people have been supported face to face at the partnership events – Southwark's partnership work is being held up by (national) Citizens Advice as an example of good practice and a model for other councils to adopt.
5. Regrets Simon Hughes's unequivocal support for the government's welfare reforms despite claiming the benefits cap would "drive families apart". It also regrets that Simon Hughes has dismissed reports of a fivefold increase in people claiming discretionary housing payments as "alarmist". It regrets that he has refused to meet with local organisation such as Cooltan Arts to discuss the impact of the reforms and that he missed the "Frontline Welfare" event despite being specifically asked to attend.

6. Calls on cabinet to:

- Continue to work constructively with advocacy groups in the borough to ensure we are able to continue to support our most vulnerable residents
- Lobby the Department of Work and Pensions for increased funding for discretionary housing payments
- Continue to challenge Simon Hughes and the Liberal Democrats regarding their role in enabling the government's welfare changes.

Comments of the Strategic Director of Housing and Community Services

- (1) A discretionary housing payment leaflet has been distributed to all council and housing association tenants and private sector tenants who receive housing benefit. This leaflet explains that financial assistance that may be available to help towards the shortfall in housing benefit received by the households.
- (2) A letter has been issued to all council and housing association tenants under-occupying and also to tenants who are overcrowded in an attempt to produce mutual exchanges between these two groups of tenants to meet the housing and financial needs of the households.
- (3) Monthly surgeries are now taking place across Southwark to target tenants and customers affected by the welfare reforms. These surgeries are conducted in partnership with the citizens advice bureau.
- (4) 67 households moved to smaller accommodation in the first three months of the financial year through the SMART Moves initiative. This initiative targets customers who are under-occupying council and housing association accommodation.
- (5) Job Centre Plus surgeries are now conducted at the homelessness and housing options service to ensure tenants and customers can access housing and employment advice through a seamless service provision.
- (6) Southwark Works also conduct surgeries at the homelessness and housing options service to ensure tenants and customers can access housing and employment advice through a seamless service provision.
- (7) The new housing allocations scheme will prioritise the re-housing of customers affected by the welfare reforms for example the highest priority on the housing register will be awarded to households who are under-occupying council and housing association properties.
- (8) The homelessness and housing options and housing operations service is working in partnership with the credit union and the citizens advice bureau to hold weekly financial inclusion sessions for all new tenants to ensure they are fully aware of the welfare reforms and how to successfully budget the households finances.

- (9) The service is working in partnership with the PECAN food bank to ensure customers affected by welfare reforms can access the food bank for emergency provisions.
- (10) The monthly Money Savvy workshops in partnership with the citizens advice bureau are proving successful with 75 tenants attending these drop in sessions every month.
- (11) The council has obtained approval from the Department of Communities and Local Government to use £1 million of housing revenue account funding as additional discretionary housing payments to ensure the DHP budget will increase from £1.1 million to £2.1 million. The additional £1 million will be for council tenants to help to reduce rent arrears and improve the financial well-being of the households.

APPENDIX 2

Drummer Lee Rigby and Faith Communities in Southwark

At council assembly on Wednesday 10 July 2013 a motion entitled 'Drummer Lee Rigby and Faith Communities in Southwark' was moved by Councillor Michael Bukola and seconded by Councillor The Right Revd Emmanuel Oyewole. The motion was agreed and stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- Registers its abhorrence at the appalling and savage murder of Drummer Lee Rigby on the streets of south-east London on 22 May 2013, and extends sympathy to his family.
- Welcomes the critical response to the murder by UK Islamic organisations including the Southwark Muslim Forum, and the cohesion shown by Londoners in condemning the attack, and rejects the divisive agenda of far-right groups who seek to use the murder for their own political ends.
- Recognises the concern from the Islamic community in Southwark about the reported rise in Islamophobic incidents since the murder, including a number of attacks on mosques across the country.
- Notes the excellent work within the Old Kent Road Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centre in bringing together Muslims of all races, and acting as a meeting place for visiting Nigerian Muslims to London.
- Looks forward to the continued involvement of the mosque within Southwark's Multi-Faith Forum.
- Reasserts its support for the charity Help for Heroes and the work it does to support wounded service men and women and their families.

Surrey Docks Brown Brick

At council assembly on Wednesday 10 July 2013 a motion entitled 'Surrey Docks Brown Brick' was proposed by Councillor Lisa Rajan and seconded by Councillor David Hubber. The motion was subsequently amended and the amended motion stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the distinctive brown brick paving in parts of Surrey Docks and Rotherhithe wards and its contribution to the character of the area. Also notes that this style of paving was introduced during the development of the area by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) in the 1980s, is used extensively in the area and is much valued by local residents.
2. Recognises that many of the roads and pavements in the areas around Greenland Dock, South Dock, Canada Water, Surrey Water, Russia Dock Woodland and the Albion Channel have been adversely affected by subsidence issues due to their construction on land reclaimed from historic docks and waterways in the area, and that this has manifested itself in paving that is often severely disrupted by tree roots and subterranean ironworks.
3. Also recognises that the LDDC's over-zealous tree planting strategy in the 1980s, in which they assumed a much lower survival rate than turned out to be the case, has led to a higher than expected number of London Planes at higher than usual densities in the area, and that the height and root growth network of these trees compounds the paving disruption problems.
4. Acknowledges that the council's longstanding approach to paving and road repairs in this area has been reactive and ad hoc, and has largely involved removing the brown brickwork and replacing it with red, purple or black tarmac. In many instances, the disruptive tree roots were not shaved or cut, and consequently re-erupt through the tarmac within 18 months of the repair. An alternative approach on Rope Street, funded by Rotherhithe Community Council, levelled the ground and re-laid the original brown brickwork, and maintained the valued character of the street.
5. Welcomes the Greenland Dock Subsidence Feasibility Study, prepared by Mouchel, commissioned by Southwark Council, funded by Rotherhithe Community Council Cleaner Greener Safer fund and proposed by local residents.
6. Also welcomes the site meeting on 7 May 2013 attended by the strategic director of environment and leisure, senior highways officers and residents to discuss the problem.
7. Calls on cabinet to recognise the important character of the area.
8. Welcomes the work being done in partnership with the community council to address these issues.

Comments of the Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure

- (1) Officers recognise the distinctive character in the area and will seek to retain this character wherever possible, subject to budgetary and any technical constraints. For example, the repaving of Greenland Quay in the current financial year will be undertaken in new red brick, with the old bricks retained for reactive footway repairs in the area.
- (2) The council's streetscape design manual officially recognises this distinctive character and officers are currently preparing a special 'Rotherhithe' palette of standard materials to reflect this. This palette will be formalised by December 2013.

APPENDIX 4

East Dulwich and Rye Lane Crown Post Offices

At council assembly on Wednesday 10 July 2013 a motion entitled 'East Dulwich and Rye Lane Crown Post Offices' was proposed by Councillor Mark Glover and seconded by Councillor Nick Dolezal. The motion was agreed and stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly is concerned that the Post Office is planning to downgrade Crown Services at Rye Lane and East Dulwich to retail operators.
2. That council assembly notes that at present the Post Office does not have any retail partners for Rye Lane and East Dulwich Crown Post Offices and is concerned that this move will lead to a relocation of offices, provide an inferior Post Office Service and will have a hugely detrimental impact on the quality of specialist services for local residents. It also believes it will lead to the recruitment of new staff on significantly lower pay, terms and conditions. Moreover the specialist trained and committed services and staff will be lost in these offices.
3. That council assembly offers its support to the campaign to protect the Rye Lane and East Dulwich Post Offices in these locations and calls on cabinet to:
 - Work with local councillors to write to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State with responsibility for Post Offices, informing them of the concerns regarding Rye Lane and East Dulwich Crown Post Offices
 - Seek assurances from the Minister that any successful franchisees for Crown Post Offices will be strongly encouraged to pay their staff the London Living Wage.

APPENDIX 5

Door Entry for the Dickens Estate

At council assembly on Wednesday 10 July 2013 a motion entitled 'Door Entry for the Dickens Estate' was proposed by Councillor Eliza Mann and seconded by Councillor Anood Al-Samerai. The motion was subsequently amended and the amended motion stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council is pleased that door entry systems are now being included again in major works plans.
2. That Council recognises that residents of Wade House, Bardell House, Tupman House and Micawber House have experienced serious problems with crime, rough sleepers and vandalism.
3. That Council notes that, as is often the case, while new security works are being installed on one block, ASB does not remain static and will travel from block to block. This is evidenced by the request in 2011 from the then opposition spokesperson for housing for new security intercom systems for Burton House, claiming this was the priority for the area.
4. That Council recognises that since this request was made in 2011, incidences of crime and ASB have risen at Tupman House, Bardell House, Micawber House and Wade House.
5. That Council therefore welcomes the commitment made by the cabinet member for housing to meet with residents of the estate to discuss their priorities for security works on the estate.
6. That Council also welcomes the commitment by the cabinet member for housing to allocate extra funding to these blocks which will save money in the long run from crime and anti-social behaviour once those discussions with residents have taken place.

Comments of the Strategic Director of Housing and Community Services

- (1) The allocation of £725,000 for the installation of new door entry systems was agreed through the housing revenue account (HRA) savings redirection process.
- (2) Officers produced an indicative programme which was consulted upon through all area forums, which was presented and approved by cabinet in May 2013. Considering the overall need across the borough for door entry systems, requests greatly outstrip available funding in the short-term. We have tried to strike a balance between installing completely new systems and renewing/upgrading existing systems. Unfortunately, there are a number of existing systems that are obsolete and if they fail they will not be able to be reinstated. These are a priority from an engineering perspective.

- (3) Equally, in our programme there are 20 new systems proposed over the next two years. In year one, the Kinglake estate which has well documented high levels of antisocial behaviour is set as a priority. Cabinet made the decision to install 9 new systems to blocks that are experiencing the worst of the problems. The other proposed new systems have varying levels of antisocial problems and reported crimes.
- (4) In regards to Bardell House, Wade House, Micawber House and Tupman House a meeting is being arranged on behalf of the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management with residents of the estate to discuss their priorities for security works on their estate and programming works in the future.

Robin Hood Tax

At council assembly on Wednesday 10 July 2013 a motion entitled 'Robin Hood Tax' was proposed by Councillor Michael Situ and seconded by Councillor Patrick Diamond. The motion was agreed and stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly notes the suffering forced upon local residents as a result of the Tory Liberal Democrat government's austerity programme which is unfairly targeting Southwark and its residents.
2. That council assembly believes that the levy of a financial transaction tax (FTT) on the speculative activities of banks, hedge funds and other financial institutions would help to alleviate some of this pressure and ensure the financial sector pays its fair share and helps to clear up the mess it helped create.
3. That council assembly therefore calls upon government to enact the FTT and use the revenues from this measure to reverse ongoing shrinkage in central grants to our council.

Northern Line Extension

At council assembly on Wednesday 10 July 2013 a motion entitled 'Northern Line Extension' was proposed by Councillor Catherine Bowman and seconded by Councillor Graham Neale. The motion was subsequently amended and the amended motion stands referred to the cabinet as a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

That council assembly:

1. Notes Transport for London's (TfL's) plans to extend the Northern Line to Nine Elms and Battersea, and the consultation on the plans that closed on 18 June.
2. Notes with particular concern the plans for a temporary shaft to be constructed on Harmsworth Street and a permanent shaft in Kennington Park, both of which would have a considerable impact on the lives of Southwark residents.
3. Urges TfL to pursue the 'gallery tunnels' option for ground treatment work as an alternative to the Harmsworth Street temporary shaft, thereby minimising the disruption to local people.
4. Regrets TfL's decision to place the permanent shaft in Kennington Park on the site of the much-loved beekeeper's lodge, and urges TfL to ensure that the relocation plan provides a suitable environment for the bee population and meets the requirements of Bee Urban and concerned local residents.
5. Calls on cabinet to work with colleagues at Lambeth Council, the GLA and TfL to obtain the best deal for Southwark residents affected by the plans.
6. Notes the letter from the cabinet member for transport, environment and recycling to TfL which already addresses the above points.