

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

(ORDINARY MEETING)

WEDNESDAY 10 JULY

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK

How many green spaces on council owned estates are currently being considered as building plots?

RESPONSE

The first phase of the council's plan to build 1,000 new council homes has identified nine sites for development, none of which are on green spaces on housing estates. No further sites have yet been agreed for later phases. There are no plans to dispose of any parcels of amenity land on housing estates, whether green space or otherwise, to third parties for development or any other purposes.

This administration has placed special emphasis on its green spaces. Not only have we invested £8 million revitalising Burgess Park, 14 of the borough's parks received the prestigious Green Flag award last year; a record for Southwark.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK

Yes thank you, Mr Mayor, I thank the Leader for his answer and the fact that he can confirm that the nine sites identified in his answer do not include any green or open spaces on housing estates. Notwithstanding, does he agree that his commitment to build 1,000 new council homes will trump current residents' desire to retain their estates' green and open spaces if more land is needed to fulfill his pledge; or can he guarantee tonight that none of Southwark housing estates' green and open space will be utilised to meet his target?

RESPONSE

Is the thrust of Councillor Hook's question that he does not want new council housing in Southwark? Because if that's the thrust of his question, I think the majority of council tenants and residents, and actually residents right across the borough, would not support him in that view and I think it is fantastic that we are building 1,000 new council homes. We are clearly using under-utilised spaces, disused garages, in order to build 1,000 new homes at the present time and that is our current intention going forward. It is not our intention to build on metropolitan open land or green spaces in any event, but you know, at the end of the day if we need more social housing and more council housing, we need to build that on our estates; sometimes compromises are needed. But we are going to work with residents at every opportunity to make sure that whatever we provide is supported by residents and I think, to help that, is the fact that of course we have a local lettings policy. At least 50% of the 1,000 new council homes that will be built will be locally let to residents on the estate affected, so I think that it is an important

issue and an important piece of information you need to take back to residents. We are not going to demur from our commitment to build 1,000 council homes between now and 2020. More council homes than have been built across all of London in the previous decade.

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MITCHELL

Would the leader of the council confirm that the council in principle is not opposed to the opening of free schools in the borough?

RESPONSE

The council does not have any in principle objection to free schools. I am however concerned that to make free schools viable and to appear popular, the government has set lower standards for free schools than other schools.

My primary concern as leader of the council is the standard of education for children in this borough, and so I would want free schools to provide a good or outstanding education and work with the authority and other schools as part of the community.

Unlike Conservative and Liberal Democrat councillors in Southwark, we believe free schools are only part of the answer to a much broader challenge, namely, how do we meet rising demand for school places in our borough. Free schools can play a part, but our primary investment strategy, which is due to come to cabinet next week, will set out a range of measures that we are taking to create additional school places; including working with outstanding existing schools to design and run new schools in the borough.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MITCHELL TO THE LEADER

Thank you Mr Mayor and I thank the Leader for his answer.

He is in error about his assertion of Conservative councillors though, because I am very happy for a variety of education provision to be made in the borough. And I also differ from him and the leader of the opposition in that I specifically asked at an education briefing in the last few months whether free schools were the only show in town in Southwark and I was told no. So he should not give up on the other opportunities. But as I asked a question specifically about free schools, can I ask the Leader to give assurances that the council's bureaucracy will not be used to obstruct the opening of new free schools?

RESPONSE

Yes I can, and I think that has been played out with what we have seen across the borough. I think the Judith Kerr free school has found a site; the Southwark free school is clearly operating – in accommodation which I think is utterly unsuitable – the Harris free school primary school is open in Peckham. So no, there is no way in which the council bureaucracy will stand in the way. We have an issue with Southwark free school not getting through planning committee, but planning I think is a completely different consideration to bureaucrats, as you might want to describe them, within any department of the council standing in the way. I want to make it absolutely clear; in terms of free schools, if we are going to get funding for new schools it is very difficult in Southwark to get anything other than a free

school. That is the reality of it. There are things you can do with existing academies to expand them, and that is what we are talking about, expansions really, in terms of providing new school places; but if you want to start a brand new school, really, this government is only interested in free schools. And that is what I was referring to when I said "the only show in town", but I welcome Councillor Mitchell's commitment to a variety of answers being a response to this particular shortage that we face. I do think this is important that councillors right across the chamber do unite on this issue, because this is an issue which affects so many of our constituents in every part of the borough.

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER

Will the leader join me in praising the work of the council's anti-fraud team after it won an award for its work tackling social housing fraud?

RESPONSE

I will, and I hope councillors from all parties will join me in congratulating the council's anti-fraud team for winning the prestigious Cliff Nicholson award for its relentless work on social housing fraud.

Everyone recognises the challenges that Southwark faces in terms of meeting the demand for affordable housing. While we are building 1,000 council homes over the next eight years, our fraud team's energetic approach to finding fraudulent tenants means that we can make sure that every council home in Southwark goes to someone who really needs it.

As London's largest social landlord, we set the ambitious target of recovering 300 properties in 2012/13. By the end of the financial year, we exceeded this target, freeing up 322 properties that could then be given to people with a genuine need. This was 17% of all houses recovered nationwide despite Southwark making up just 1% of the total housing stock.

I would also like to draw attention to the comments of Tim Crowley, chair of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy audit panel, who said: "The approach that has been developed by Southwark Council can be replicated elsewhere and this kind of innovation is a shining example of how the finance function can contribute to driving up standards despite public sector cuts."

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER

Could I, as the chair of audit and governance committee, thank the Leader for his answer in this question which was about the council's anti fraud team winning a reward for its work in tackling social housing fraud. However I know as a Labour council we are never satisfied, so I ask the Leader what further steps we can take to tackle social housing fraud?

RESPONSE

Can I thank Councillor Glover for his supplemental. I think congratulations are due to work of the officers on this issue. It is a great frustration for tenants, lawful tenants on our estates when they think that there has been unlawful subletting and effectively they are subsidising people and effectively supporting people to live in

neighbouring properties. So I am really pleased that we have had such great work recovering over 300 properties this year.

The target for next year is to recover 500 homes and that really would be record breaking and I am confident actually with the team that we have got we could really do that.

The council has also been shortlisted, you might be interested to know, for the Institute for Rates, Revenues and Valuations (if you did not know that existed, well you do now) on tenancy fraud, council tax fraud and benefit fraud.

I really do want to pay tribute to the brilliant work of our team in this area; it is a national leader, and I think we should be proud of the work that officers have been doing this time to actually increase the supply of council homes for Southwark residents. That is what we are talking about.

4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI

What estimates has the council made about the number of new properties built in Southwark being sold to foreign investors?

RESPONSE

Overall two thirds of all landlords own fewer than five properties. The council does not therefore consider that there is a large scale overseas investment issue. Regarding leaving homes vacant this is largely confined to very large value homes being kept as the occasional residence of extremely wealthy individuals. Most investors, either from home or abroad, rely on the income generating ability of their assets and therefore put them into the private rented sector to generate that income. The current government does not impose any restrictions on purchase of property be it commercial or residential by foreign investors.

Nonetheless, it is fair to estimate that within the prime residential sector represented in Southwark by the highest value developments along the river, sales to foreign investors make up a significant proportion. We are turning this situation to our advantage by using planning agreements with developers of a handful of the most valuable riverside sites to fund the delivery of 1,000 new council homes in Southwark over the next eight years – more than have been built in London in the last 10 years. These council homes will be built across the borough, from Long Lane to East Dulwich, and represent the biggest council house building programme of its kind in the country.

I know this is an issue that has been raised by her party colleague in parliament. I note that he made the claim that new properties at the Heygate were advertised to buyers in Asia first. This is not the case. The new homes at both One The Elephant and Trafalgar Place were launched in the UK and overseas simultaneously, with the local community having first sight of the homes at specially arranged community events.

I would also remind her that the overriding reason why there is a shortage in new affordable housing, not just in Southwark but across the country, is because her government slashed the social housing budget by 60% back in 2010. A cut which Simon Hughes praised. It feels that this focus on foreign buyers is an attempt to hide that fact.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR AL-SAMERAI

Thanks Mr Mayor thank you to the Leader for his answer. I am slightly concerned; I thought we might be able to agree that it was a bad thing that homes in Southwark got sold and marketed abroad first rather than in Southwark or in London, but clearly the Leader from his answer seems to think that that is a good thing. Perhaps he could rethink that or talk to residents about what their view of it is because certainly I know lots of residents who would rather have the opportunity of buying locally.

I know he likes going for dinner at the Ivy with developers, so possibly the next time he is having dinner with them, he could ask whether what was done with the Old Docklands development, I understand, where actually developers agreed they would market first locally for sale so that actually local people have a chance to buy first. If he could ask developers in Southwark to commit to that I think it would be a really good step forwards.

RESPONSE

I make a case every time I meet developers about how they should market their properties because I am incredibly conscious, I do want to thank you for your supplemental question by the way.

I am very conscious; I do make this point to developers and I am reassured actually that there is often a joint launch of property sales both at home and abroad. More often than not actually property sales are launched in London; and that might not be the impression that one gets but that is the reality of the situation. I do think it is important to recognise, with some of the very high end expensive developments where we are getting a levy from them which is going to fund 1,000 new council homes, that those development are only happening because of the fact that money is coming in from abroad. We might not like it but that is the reality of the world economy that we are working in and living in in Southwark. That is paying for 1,000 new council homes which are going to go to Southwark residents. Now I think that is really good news and is something that we should be celebrating, absolutely. It is also the fact that money is going into these developments from abroad, it is also meaning that they are getting built in the first place and that is providing jobs for Southwark residents.

You know the fact is that we saw 7,400 more people find work in this borough last year than the previous year. That is because, in part I have no doubt because of what is going on in our borough in terms of building and the opportunities which are coming from it and I think as everybody has said in the debate this evening, the best answer to the problems of poverty that we face in this borough is to find work for people, and I still sign up to the aspiration that everyone who wants a job should have a job, and that is our aim and our mission in our borough; and we will carry on pursuing that aim and that mission because it is the right one for a Labour council in Southwark.

5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN HAYES

What action is the council taking to meet demand for school places in the borough?

RESPONSE

The council has developed a detailed and robust strategy to meet the demand for places that we are experiencing and anticipate will increase in the coming years. This detailed strategy is to be considered by cabinet on 16 July 2013.

We have worked closely with our existing schools, diocesan authorities, neighbouring authorities, the Department for Education and free school proposers to draw together a strategy that can meet the need for places through the expansion of successful and popular schools, the delivery of new places at new schools delivered directly by the council and through free schools.

The first phase of this programme is funded and the existing and initial increased demand can be met through the delivery of new permanent capacity but it is essential that further funding is made available by the Department for Education if future phases are to be delivered to meet the ongoing need for places.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN HAYES

I would like to thank the Leader for his answer. There has been a degree of discussion about the issue of school places during this question time already this evening, but I would like to ask the Leader because I think it is part of the nub of the problem with free schools, how is the council seeking to ensure that free school providers in Southwark have fair and open admissions criteria?

RESPONSE

I want to thank Councillor Hayes for her supplemental question. The reality is that as a local authority we don't have any control over a free school's admission policy. With academies we can work together and they will agree that they will sign up to our admissions policy so we have a common admissions policy. This is not the case with free schools, and this is just one aspect of free schools that is worrying. The lack of qualifications that are required for teaching in a free school is also I think another worrying concern.

You know, free schools, interesting, one or two maybe across London; and I'm not ideologically opposed at all, I want to make this absolutely clear, I should not even have said that, but there are issues with free schools which I think we would not accept them in local authority schools. The issue is concerning how pupils are admitted, their admissions policies and the qualifications of teaching staff and I don't see why somehow because it is a free school, a second rate, potentially, of education and a different form of admissions policy is somehow acceptable. I don't find it acceptable. I think free schools should be signing up to a common admissions policy right across our borough. I think that would win support of the local community; it would certainly support of this local authority.

6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES

Can the leader provide an update on the council's progress against the four identified priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board?

RESPONSE

1. Prevention and reduction of alcohol-related misuse

Championed by Professor John Moxham of King's Health Partners, this strand oversaw a refresh of Southwark's alcohol strategy. Resulting key partner actions included a roll-out of training on 'identification and brief advice', strengthened responses around the sale of alcohol and anti-social behaviour, and closer working between King's Health Partners, GPs and the local authority's drug and alcohol team as well as with housing and community safety services. Rates for hospital stays for alcohol-related harm for adults and under-18s are both better than the national average.

2. Coping skills, resilience and mental wellbeing

This strand focused on developing a mental wellbeing, coping and resilience strategy, and underpinning work programme, and was championed through the board by Dr Patrick Holden. Key actions over the past year include developing a personalised 'support planning' package alongside personal health budgets to help people with continuing care needs to choose how best they can achieve their health goals, and testing '5 Ways to Wellbeing' in a number of schools via peer educators to improve understanding of mental health issues.

3. Early intervention and families

Championed by Romi Bowen, strategic director of children's and adults' services, this strand links directly to the borough's children and young people's plan, which is being updated currently. Activity in support of this strand includes the reconfigurations of a range of services including the local authority's early help locality teams, as well as the health visiting and school nursing services. As a result of joint action, performance in key maternal and early years' indicators is improving, for example with above national average levels for breastfeeding initiation, smoking in pregnancy, and early years' education outcomes.

4. Healthy weight and exercise

Following the refresh of the borough's healthy weight strategy in 2012, activity in this strand has focused on taking forward its recommendations. Led by the director of public health, actions include increased support to schools to promote a whole school approach to health and wellbeing, alongside the introduction of free healthy school meals; increased support to promote physical activity through the Change 4 Life clubs, and investment in early years' interventions, including activity in children's centres. As a result, although still high, obesity rates in reception-aged pupils have fallen over recent years from 14.7% in 2009/10 to 12.1% in 2011/12. Future activity will focus on older children, where performance remains significantly below national rates.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES

Can I thank the council Leader for his response. Can I ask him to confirm whether he thinks it is acceptable and consistent for Southwark Council's pension funds to invest £2.6 million in British American Tobacco when we are now responsible for public health and encouraging residents to quit smoking and live healthier lives? And if he agrees this is unacceptable, will he pledge now to insure that these unethical investments are ended, reinvested, and no further investments are made in tobacco companies?

RESPONSE

I want to thank Councillor Noakes for his supplemental question. He has raised a very interesting issue, I mean, I think when this issue was raised in the press Councillor Livingstone pointed out there will be no change in our investment policy, in fact we were just rolling on an investment policy from the previous administration.

I think it is probably right actually that we as a local authority do look where we are investing, and, you know, I would far rather see us have the ability of our pension fund to invest in infrastructure projects in our borough to create jobs and opportunities but that freedom does not lie – and Councillor Livingstone is looking very nervous now. I do also think that members have to remind themselves though that there is a deficit within our pension fund at this present time and many former employees and current employees of Southwark Council look to that pension fund for their security and safety in retirement. We do owe it to them to insure the best return on our investment.

But it will be an issue. I think with my public health hat on that I might sit down and have a discussion with those who have control over our pension fund in the council and see what we can do. I think it is right that we do look at it, it is right that we are self critical about how we invest, but bearing in mind all the very different competing interests that we have to try and manage this process. But we will have that conversation. I don't want to scare Councillor Livingstone anymore this evening, so I'm going to end up.

7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES

Southwark now has the highest demand for food banks in London. The director of Pecan food bank in Peckham attributes this increase in demand to the government's benefit changes. Does the leader agree?

RESPONSE

I think it is a national disgrace that in the 21st century in one of the most affluent cities in the world some families are struggling to have access to food – a basic human right. I think it is reprehensible that a coalition government Minister, Lord Freud, has tried to claim that the increase in demand for food banks is because more of them existed.

I know anecdotally from Pecan that last year there were no referrals from Jobcentre Plus in the first two months of the year. This year for the same period there were 117 referrals (109 of these from Peckham alone) - all seeming to be due to delays in benefits. Their view is that the Jobcentre rather than dealing with the problem by, for example, making advances on benefits is just to refer people straight on to the food bank.

This is the harsh reality of this government's welfare reforms which Southwark Liberal Democrats and Simon Hughes have supported from day one.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES

Thank you Mr Mayor I would like to thank the Leader for his comprehensive response to my question, however I would like to ask a substantive. I hope he was

able to recognise yesterday that the Archbishop of Canterbury joined the chorus of condemnation of the Minister's comments on food banks. I would like to ask: who does the Leader think has the right on the impact of the Liberal Democrat/Tory welfare reform, the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Liberal Democrats?

RESPONSE

Well I don't think there is any choice; a very holy man of the cloth or not. So look – I mean, I think I think it is a tragedy, it is truly a tragedy in 21st century London, that we have food banks and that people are reliant on food banks. And, you know, we are doing our bit as a council and encouraging staff to bring in donations for the food bank and they are getting positive support from us and our employees are playing our part, and everyone thinks 'This is great that we are playing our part.'

It is one of the charities I wish we just did not have to support, continue to support. It feels completely wrong, and in this whole welfare debate we have had this evening it really feels that we are going backwards and some of the decisions that you have heard representatives from the law centre and others having to make about whether people get food vouchers or not. You know we are really, we really risk going back to the era of the work house and the Poor Laws and the overseers deciding who gets what. That is not a Southwark that I think any of us wants to live in; but I fear however that this is the consequence of what this government is doing.

We are opposed to the welfare reports forms, we are opposed to poverty in this borough; we are working for jobs and growth. And as I say I commend absolutely Pecan and the work that those who provide that support in Southwark do, but I hope this is a charity that after 2015 and return of a Labour government we will see wound up as people actually have the opportunities and the money in the pocket that they need and deserve to live a proper and fulfilling life in our borough.

8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GEOFFREY THORNTON

How much has been spent across the council departments on a) catering b) alcohol in each of last three years and specifically, how much was the total cost of the new mayor's reception this year?

RESPONSE

Council expenditure on catering and refreshments since 2007/8 is as follows:

2012/13	£586,000
2011/12	£750,000
2010/11	£913,000
2009/10	£1,179,000
2008/09	£1,765,000
2007/08	£2,765,000

The budget does not separate alcohol from other refreshment costs, but alcohol is restricted to a very limited number of events.

The table below shows the cost of catering for mayor making for each of the last seven years.

Municipal Year	Mayor	Political Group	Catering costs for Mayor Making exclusive of VAT	Notes
2007/2008	Bob Skelly	Liberal Democrat	£4,437.25	Ceremony held at St Giles Church in conjunction with Honorary Alderman Ceremony
2008/2009	Eliza Mann	Liberal Democrat	£2,637.88	Ceremony held at Town Hall - outside caterers Refreshments for all attendees at Ceremony
2009/2010	Jeff Hook	Liberal Democrat	£1,354.00	Outside caterers supplied refreshments for Past Mayors, Free Citizens & Hon Alderman only
2010/2011	Tayo Situ	Labour	£870.00	Election year - followed format for previous year
2011/2012	Lorraine Lauder	Labour	£2,217.00	First ceremony at Tooley Street - outside caterers supplied refreshments for all attending ceremony - no inhouse catering available at the time
2012/2013	Althea Smith	Labour	£1,440.00	Refreshments for all attendees at ceremony supplied by in house caterers
2013/2014	Abdul Mohamed	Labour	£1,444.50	Refreshments for all attendees at ceremony supplied by in house caterers

9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CLAIRE HICKSON

Is he surprised that it has taken Southwark Liberal Democrat councillors three years to publicly criticise Simon Hughes MP for a decision he has taken in parliament?

RESPONSE

Yes I am.

While I welcome Southwark Liberal Democrats' public criticism of Simon Hughes for his recent vote on marriage equality in the House of Commons, I am surprised

that they have been silent on so many other issues where Simon Hughes has failed to stand up for people in the borough:

- Tax cuts for millionaires – reducing the top tax rate to 45p
- Increasing VAT to 20% costing hard working families an extra £450 a year
- Scrapping the education maintenance allowance
- Trebling tuition fees
- Scrapping of secure tenancies
- Introduction of “affordable” rent at up to 80% market rent
- 60% cut to social housing budget
- Letting developers wriggle out of section 106 affordable housing requirements
- David Cameron’s NHS privatisation
- 20% cut to the police
- Cuts to legal aid
- The bedroom tax

These are decisions he has made which are having a very significant impact on people in this borough, and yet their local Liberal Democrat councillors say nothing.

Not to mention the fact neither Simon Hughes nor Liberal Democrat councillors have once challenged the government about the 28% cut this council has seen in its budget. This is not about party politics. This is about the government taking an axe to the vital services this council provides and which our residents depend on.

It is shameful that they have lacked the courage to stand up for Southwark residents and I believe it is something residents of this borough will not forget.

10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL BUKOLA

What number of private sector homes does the council estimate to have a category one hazard? How many complaints and requests for assistance with private accommodation issues have been received in each of the last three years?

RESPONSE

The latest census data indicates there are 28,400 dwellings in the private rented sector (PRS). The most recent data available on the condition of the PRS in Southwark comes from the council’s housing condition survey in 2008 which concluded 37% of dwellings had category 1 hazards. Therefore, assuming conditions have remained the same it can be estimated that there are over 10,400 dwellings in the PRS that have category 1 hazards

Below are the statistics for the number of complaints received for assistance with private sector accommodation.

Service requests over the past 6 years have increased by approximately 30%.

From	To	Service Requests
01/04/2013	30/06/2013	264
01/04/2012	31/03/2013	1302

01/04/2011	31/03/2012	1107
01/04/2010	31/03/2011	1040
01/04/2009	31/03/2010	1038
01/04/2008	31/03/2009	901
01/04/2007	31/03/2008	949

The level of service requests have been increasing for a number of reasons. There has been a significant increase in media interest in conditions in the PRS particularly with regard to "beds in sheds". This has led to more enquiries received from concerned neighbours informing the council of potentially seriously overcrowded dwellings.

We have also had two particularly cold winters which leads to an increase in housing related issues such as cold and dampness. The environmental health and trading standards team that regulate the private rented sector have also improved the links with other services that deliver services to private sector tenants and so internal referrals have increased.

I want people in Southwark to have a good place to live. In our council owned properties our priority was to make homes warm, dry and safe. Now, in the private rented sector I have appointed Councillor Mark Williams as deputy cabinet member to focus on driving up standards across the sector.

11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS

What are the latest employment levels in the borough?

RESPONSE

Overall in the last year, Southwark's employment figure has increased by 3.3% from 66.5% to 69.8% of the total working age population in employment. To put this into context, at the same time, our 'near neighbours' Lambeth and Lewisham saw small decreases in employment rates of 0.3% and 0.2% respectively. In pure numbers there has been a 7,400 increase in numbers of people in employment, an increase of 5.3% on the year before (against a change in the London average of +1.8%).

Because the London employment rate also increased over the last year, it is important to look at the extra growth in employment for Southwark's residents versus London's. Southwark's employment numbers increased by 5.3% versus a London average of 1.8% i.e. an additional 3.5%. In numbers this equates to an extra 4,900 people into work above the number we would have seen if Southwark's employment were growing at the same rate as London's.

When totalling up over the last year so far our programmes found jobs for some 650 people through initiatives such as the youth fund and other employment support.

This is obviously fantastic news for the borough and shows the difference that can be made by working proactively to boost jobs and growth. Whereas the government's flagship jobs programme, the work programme, has floundered and

failed to deliver, Southwark's economic development team has done a fantastic job in making sure Southwark residents benefit from the opportunities that come from being in the heart of London.

I think it is also worth noting that this administration's determination to get moving on major regeneration projects in the borough after eight years of dither and delay has also had a really positive impact on the local employment market.

12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL

How many council homes do the council plan to build in each year between now and 2020?

RESPONSE

The current projections for completion of new homes up to 2020 are as follows:

2013/14	12
2014/15	11
2015/16	200
2016/17	100
2017/18	350
2018/19	200
2019/20	150
Total:	1,023

The 2013/14 and 2014/15 projected completions are hidden homes that are either on site or are being worked up for development. To achieve the completions in 2015/16 we will be starting construction of the 200 homes in the current financial year.

The additions to the housing stock through new build for the preceding years are as follows:

2012/13	16
2011/12	3
2010/11	7
2009/10	0
2008/09	0
2007/08	1
2006/07	0
2005/06	12

13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAN GARFIELD

What does the leader think will be the impact of the Conservative/Liberal Democrat's latest spending review on Southwark?

RESPONSE

This latest round of cuts from the Tories and Liberal Democrats are likely to add to the massive budget pressures the council is already facing. Taking into account the £90 million cut Southwark has already faced from this government, we now have to plug a further £23 million gap for 2014/15. It is no wonder that local authorities of all parties are telling Eric Pickles that enough is enough.

It will mean more difficult decisions in the year ahead, it will mean an increased use of reserves and balances but most importantly it will mean vital services which people in this borough depend on being cut while more affluent places face a much smaller cut.

People should remember that since 2010 Southwark has had the equivalent cut of £249 for every man, woman and child in the borough compared to £15 in Epsom and Ewell.

People should remember that we were told these cuts were a necessary tonic to eliminate the deficit by 2015 and boost the UK economy. This has not proven to be the case.

People should remember Southwark Liberal Democrats calling for us to use up the council's reserves in 2011 and to stop inventing "future cuts".

And people should remember that despite the difficult decisions we have had to make, this administration has delivered on its promises, is building more council homes, is keeping libraries and leisure centres open and is creating a fairer future for all in Southwark.

14. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR NORMA GIBBES (CAMBERWELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Please will the council support the campaign to improve the 343 bus route and lobby Transport for London to improve services on that route?

RESPONSE

We are maintaining pressure on Transport for London (TfL) to provide a better service for local people that use the 343 route and have called on the London Mayor and TfL to improve provision, especially along Southampton Way, Wells Way and through the Aylesbury Estate.

We have regularly lobbied TfL for improvements to the 343 service, including on at least nine occasions since the beginning of 2011.

Through the biannual review of bus service provision in which TfL advertise those services which are due for a contract renewal. Local authorities are given the opportunity to comment on these services, but are also invited to make representations on any other service, as they see fit. On each occasion, the council have requested a review and improvements to the 343 service.

The council have the following concerns:

- This service links New Cross with London Bridge passing through Peckham, north east Camberwell, the Aylesbury estate and Elephant and Castle, providing these areas with a link to London Bridge and opportunities to interchange at Peckham and Elephant and Castle. It is these communities that would have particularly benefited from the cross river tram.
- The low levels of public transport access within the Aylesbury and North Peckham Estates, which feature as areas of high deprivation.

- Overcrowding: It has been noted that increased overcrowding is a particular problem during school closing hours as there are four schools on the route. The increased level of service during the Olympic Games made a significant difference to the crowding levels.
- The 343, which has both reliability and capacity problems, regularly passes stops, at peak hours, in the Southampton Way/Wells Way/Albany Road/Thurlow Street portion of the journey without taking on passengers resulting in considerable waiting times. At other times, even well into the evening, gaps of up to 30 minutes can occur between buses.
- Concern has also been expressed over the speed of the bus, particularly in the evening. It should be ensured that sufficient time is allowed within the timetable.

The local campaign is gaining much headway with 926 signatures in support of the need for improvements to the service collected so far. At a public meeting earlier this year, commuters and key stakeholders also had the opportunity to highlight their concerns. At this meeting a senior TfL officer gave a commitment from TfL to respond to the problem areas along the route (they have undertaken to update the Camberwell, Peckham and Walworth community in the autumn on progress made).

Changes to frequency will contribute to reducing overcrowding and will lead to a more efficient service that residents can rely upon. In addition, there needs to be direct, modern and efficient transport links to the places where residents need to travel to and from, the north and south of the borough and central London.

A six part TV documentary showcasing the public meeting is currently featuring on BBC2, helping to highlight the important of improvements needed on the route and raising awareness of this local issue.

In recognition of the importance of this issue, the GLA transport committee have undertaken to make a site visit to the area to see the problem for themselves and for it to inform their scrutiny report into bus services in the capital.

15. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ROBIN CROOKSHANK HILTON (DULWICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Would the cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety confirm that a substantial part of the recent £750,000 capital allocation to support policing and community safety will remain available to the Dulwich area, to ensure resources, in the event that the new policing model for the south-west cluster is shown by the autumn review to require additional premises expenditure?

RESPONSE

Yes.

The Mayor of London's new policing plan, resulting from the 20 percent cut in police funding made by the coalition government, will have a detrimental impact on Southwark: the closure of two police stations, the reduction of hours as two more,

the loss of the successful ward-based safer neighbourhood teams which are being replaced by multi-ward cluster teams, and the net loss of 14 percent in police numbers from this borough since 2010.

We are committed to ensuring that our communities as well as those that are victims of crime have the ability to access police and victim support when in need of it. The council's decision to secure a capital allocation of £750,000 funding for the community safety programme is intended to provide resources to ensure that there are contact points and neighbourhood policing teams in each part of the borough, along with broader initiatives.

From this allocation, we have identified £100,000 specifically to provide solutions in Dulwich arising from the closure of East Dulwich police station. This could include a neighbourhood policing base but it is for the Metropolitan Police Service to determine what form this might take and ensure that this money is spent in ways that meet their own operational requirements, within the constraints of the new multi-ward cluster model.

The police in Southwark are not currently convinced that a neighbourhood policing base is required in Dulwich. Their south west cluster is operating out of Camberwell police station.

As Dulwich councillors will be aware, I met with representatives of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and Southwark police on 17 May 2013 to discuss this issue further. Given the strength of local concern, a review on how successful the new cluster arrangements have been operating in Dulwich will take place in December, six months after implementation.

We are therefore holding back the £100,000 identified for solutions in Dulwich until that review takes place. MOPAC have also offered match-funding.

During this initial six month period, Scotland Yard's property services department will undertake a feasibility study of the Dulwich Hospital Gatehouse proposal to assess whether the use of that building for a patrol base or patrol dropping-off point offers good value for money in case the review identifies that such a facility is required.

In the interim, the council has used other funding from the £750,000 to establish a contact point for both the police and victim support at Dulwich Library. The police contact point would move to the Gatehouse if a base/dropping off point is established there.

16. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON (BOROUGH, BANKSIDE AND WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

What actions are being taken by Southwark council to address the very considerable impacts on local residents that will arise from the proposed Northern Line extension, and the shaft which is being constructed in Kennington Park, and with specific regard to:

1. The impact on Kennington tube station
2. The structural, planning, and parking control issues arising from the construction process

3. The impact of the construction process on the very important green space of Kennington Park?

RESPONSE

The cabinet member for transport, environment and recycling, Councillor Hargrove, made a representation to the Secretary of State for Transport, outlining the council's support in principle but detailing a number of concerns regarding the impacts on Southwark residents. These include:

1. We have seen evidence to indicate that the proposed cross-passages at Kennington Station are sufficient to allow the station to operate without increased congestion arising from the extension, but we have requested that the cross-passages are introduced before the extension is opened. We have also asked that works to address ticket hall congestion, largely unrelated to the extension, be brought forward.
2. Modelling has shown that ground movement, and hence the structural impact on properties, is likely to be minimal but will be monitored and addressed if necessary by TfL under obligations set out in their Transport and Works Act Order submission. All planning matters are being resolved satisfactorily. The transport assessment has shown that the impact on residents' parking will be minimal.
3. The construction necessarily takes part of the park on a temporary basis. I am persuaded that this is the only realistic construction option, and that the temporary relocation of facilities (the dog-walking area and bee-keeping project) is appropriate.

17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC WELLBEING FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES (PECKHAM AND NUNHEAD COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

What is the council doing about general improvements in the Peckham town centre area including Rye Lane and Peckham High Street, in particular shop fronts, and what steps are being taken to attract different retailers in this area, due to the number of empty retail shops? Please confirm whether there is a lottery grant available to carry out these improvements?

RESPONSE

The council has listened to the concerns of residents and local businesses to improve Peckham town centre. The Peckham and Nunhead area action plan (AAP) incorporates these views, and was submitted to the Secretary of State for the Examination on Public (EIG) to be held at the end of July.

The draft AAP sets out policies for Peckham town centre with the aim of making a major town centre a magnet for retail growth. The key aims are to:

- Enable the provision of additional retail floor space. We have identified capacity for approx 8,000 sqm (net) of additional retail floor space in Peckham town centre to mostly be accommodated on two development proposal sites, the Aylesbury shopping centre and the Copeland Road Industrial Park. There are also smaller amounts at 1-27 Bournemouth Road.

- Regenerate the area around Peckham Rye railway station. There is scope to create new and enhanced retail and business provision on this site.
- Improve the public realm and create space for new markets and street trading and encourage a mix of complementary arts, culture, leisure and entertainment in Peckham town centre which will help to contribute to supporting a lively and vibrant centre.

The council is currently in the process of preparing a stage 2 bid for the Peckham townscape heritage initiative (THI) to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for up to £1.675 million. This is subsequent to a stage 1 pass received by the council in November 2011 and an award of £50,000 for the development of the scheme.

The Peckham THI area includes Rye Lane, south of the railway station, the junction with Rye Lane and Peckham High Street and the junction with Peckham Hill Street with Peckham High Street.

If the council is successful with the Peckham THI it will allow some property owners and leaseholders to receive grant funding as well as:

- The restoration of shop fronts, doors, windows, pilasters, cornices, etc
- Cost of eligible repair works such as brickwork cleaning and repairs, mouldings, cornices and parapets.

The team has been working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders including local community groups, the business community, property owners and designated council officers to develop the application in time for the deadline submission in January-February of 2014. The project has a five year implementation period and is projected to commence in June-July 2014 pending a successful stage 2 bid.

In addition, the council has invested £100,000 from the community restoration fund to support the development of business-led improvements to Peckham town centre through a town team model.

In line with the council's economic wellbeing strategy the Peckham town team involves businesses and community groups directly in decisions on local improvements while enabling the voice of local businesses to be heard in influencing council service delivery that affects them. Monthly meetings have resulted in:

- Deep cleaning along Rye Lane: this has shown noticeable improvements along Rye Lane and has also brought the businesses together to get involved in all stages of the process, from selecting and commissioning a provider to providing feedback to the contractor during a 'walk around'.
- Improved parking measures including working with the council's public realm team to develop ideas for new signs to inform people about free parking at the weekends.
- Consumer research study: The town team have commissioned a street survey of visitors in Peckham town centre from Thursday 11 July 2013 to Saturday 13 July 2013, returning for further interviews the following week.

They aim to conduct 300 interviews using a questionnaire agreed by the town team. The objectives of the survey are to:

- Profile visitors currently found in Peckham town centre
 - Benchmark their current behaviour as shoppers and leisure users
 - Identify what visitors wish for to enhance their experience in Peckham.
- Footfall cameras: developing proposals to install footfall cameras – on hold pending longer term funding.
 - Map: Peckham Vision have developed proposals for a map of Peckham and Rye Lane promoting local shops and activities, the final designs will be presented to the Town Team for approval.
 - Pop-up shop: Positive discussions underway with a local landlord about utilising a large commercial unit on the ground floor to host a series of pop-up shops prior to new tenants moving in.

LSE Cities has been reporting to the council on its in depth research into the economy of Rye Lane as an example of an 'ordinary street' in a town centre. Their research found that the many and varied uses and occupiers in Rye Lane bring strength, vitality and resilience to its economy, demonstrated by a strong commercial rental market and high occupancy rates. The capacity of Rye Lane to host such a dense and varied mix of business, cultural and community uses that draw people to the street is its key strength, along with its surrounding residential density. According to the GLA's High Street London report, Peckham town centre has 2,100 businesses and 13,400 employees.

18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL NOBLET

What priority is the cabinet member giving to ensure that Fisher FC can return to the Surrey Docks Stadium?

RESPONSE

I have met with Fisher FC representatives and directed officers to try and secure a return of the new Fisher FC to their former area. However, the council is not able to assist Fisher FC to return to Surrey Docks stadium as the council sold its freehold interest in the site to the directors of Fisher Athletic in 2006.

£1 million of the agreed receipt was to be spent on improvements to the stadium facilities. This never happened and the stadium was abandoned.

The Surrey Docks stadium is being sold by the administrators and council officers have been working with the proposed purchasers to get back the metropolitan open land former football pitch into council ownership as a public park, whilst re-providing a football facility with a new 3G pitch for the use of Fisher FC and the general public on the St Pauls site on Salter Rd.

At the Fisher AGM last month Fisher FC members, including Simon Hughes MP, agreed to support the St Pauls ground proposals. Club officials thanked officers for their efforts in trying to bring this about.

Negotiations are still ongoing with the developers and if this is successfully concluded a report will be brought to cabinet and the developers will make a single planning application to cover both sites.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL NOBLET

Thank you, Mr Mayor. A belated welcome to your new role. Can I thank the cabinet member for her very warm, glowing and welcome answer on the issue of Fisher FC moving back to their spiritual home in Surrey Docks Ward? I think I particularly welcome in her answer the issue of having one planning application, I think that's going to be particularly important in securing this deal. But can I ask, two very quick points, Mr Mayor – one is, is she in a position to guarantee that the proposed park on the old pitch at Surrey Docks stadium will be a park which is open to all residents at all times of the day; and can she also given an assurance that St Pauls Field itself will be transferred to the club for the future use at the end of the deal which the council is proposing?

RESPONSE

Thank you very much for the supplemental. It's easier for me to answer the second one than the first one, because I think the subject of whether this park will be available for everyone to use I think is still the subject of discussions with the developers, is that right? But I would have to find that out and I myself don't know the answer to that because it's about a planning matter.

I think in discussions with – yes, Fisher is very pleased indeed about this, we have been talking for some time, and they are really thrilled. They desperately get back to Bermondsey and not have to play in south Camberwell ward, which is rather a long way away. And I think – well, certainly the discussions so far, because they are sort of at the beginning stages, are that we will evolve a process of the club sort of working into that site and we will think about how they want to develop their particular role on that site. I think that's probably about all I can say at the moment because that's about as far as we have got.

19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

How many leisure centre visits for swimming and other water-based activities were made to council run facilities between September 2011 and February 2012? How many were made between September 2012 and February 2013?

RESPONSE

The council has swimming pools at Peckham Pulse, Camberwell leisure centre, Seven Islands and Dulwich. Surrey Docks Water Sports Centre (SDWSC) also has an outdoor water based activity programme.

September 2011 - February 2012

Total wet side visits 206,549 - broken down by:

- 196,946 wet side visits (all swimming) at the four sites with pools
- 9,603 wet side visits for sailing at SDWSC.

September 2012 - February 2013

Total wet side visits 196,238 - broken down by:

- 186,290 wet side visits (all swimming) at four sites with pools
- 9,948 wet side visits for sailing at SDWSC.

Wetside visits at the leisure centres with swimming pools dropped by 5% between the two periods. This was indicative of a downward trend nationally shown for swimming as demonstrated by Sport England's active people survey over recent years. This is in stark contrast to the overall picture of increased general participation across all Southwark leisure centre activities.

For the period September 2011 to February 2012 total leisure centre participation was 636,129 of which Elephant and Castle leisure centre accounted for 127,040.

For the same period the following year, September 2012 to February 2013, participation was 603,705. However, Elephant and Castle leisure centre was closed during this period. Like-for-like comparison of general leisure centre usage across all sites that were open for both periods shows an increase in participation of 94,616 or 18.6% (509,089 to 603,705).

This supports research undertaken since the Olympics that shows that nationally, people are taking up new and more sports. Whilst this may have had a slight negative impact on wetside activities, it has had a far greater positive impact on general participation levels at our leisure facilities overall.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you for your answer, Councillor Ward. I was going to ask you about the problems in Camberwell swimming pool, but I'll write to you about the problems with condensation there. I just wondered if you could give us the proposed opening time for the leisure centre at the Elephant & Castle?

RESPONSE

The leisure centre at the Elephant & Castle, 2014, month – late 2014; the second half of 2014.

20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS

What role has the cabinet member played in securing Section 106 money for leisure facilities at the Elephant and Castle?

RESPONSE

It was agreed by cabinet in July 2010 to adopt the site of the current leisure centre as the preferred location for new leisure facilities at Elephant & Castle. Cabinet also agreed that receipts generated from the sale of the residential component would be reinvested to deliver the leisure facility. Subsequently in August 2011 the cabinet member for regeneration and corporate strategy agreed a consultation plan to establish what leisure facilities residents wanted.

The consultation was successful. 1,316 responses were received - a 16% response rate compared to an anticipated rate of just 5%. It clearly demonstrated

as we had expected that what people really want was a new swimming pool. The next most popular facilities were a gym, exercise studio and sports hall.

In July 2011 we agreed to dispose of the front part of the site to Lend Lease. All the monies for the capital receipt will go towards the costs of the scheme.

The planning authority carried out an independent appraisal of the Lend Lease scheme which concluded that their residential scheme could sustain a £3.5 million affordable housing contribution but that in this specific case the need to provide a new leisure facility to support the regeneration of the area justified a departure from normal policy and that therefore this Section 106 sum should be put towards the provision of the new leisure facility.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS

Thank you Mr Mayor. I thank the cabinet member for her answer. I think in principle, people didn't have a problem with the affordable housing contribution going towards the leisure centre, and I think that they believed that the contribution that was made from that and the sale of the land would in fact pay for the leisure centre. We did get, in fact, probably the worst percentage settlement we've ever had on affordable housing on that, at something like 4.2% on the LendLease deal, which was a great disappointment and I wondered therefore whether or not the cabinet member can tell us how far short that leaves us of actually completing the leisure centre which we all thought was going to be paid for by that development?

RESPONSE

As I hope you all appreciate, my role has been about the development of the leisure centre and the funding that we have and how we use that to provide a very good facility. I don't have – my colleague Councillor Colley, who was involved in the regeneration process, may be able to give you an answer where I won't be.

RESPONSE FROM CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY

All I can say on this really is to say that the development of the new leisure centre at the Elephant & Castle is fully funded and will be going ahead. It will be opening – I have to just quickly correct the previous answer, afraid we got a bit confused; I thought you were asking about opening hours. The leisure centre is now due to open in early 2015 because of the delays there were in finding the burial site underneath the previous leisure centre.

21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE BOWMAN

What objects belonging jointly to the South London Gallery and to the council art collection were being housed at the Cuming museum and/or adjacent buildings at the time of the fire?

RESPONSE

Since 2003 the Cuming Museum has managed Southwark's art collection from the South London Gallery.

At the time of the fire the museum's temporary exhibition gallery housed the Birds, Beasts and Beyond ceramics exhibition which displayed 81 pieces of Martinware (and ceramics by other artists) together with four related framed works.

Within the museum's History of Southwark gallery there were four framed works by artist and painter Austin Osman Spare. The rest of the art collection is housed in secure storage.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE BOWMAN

Thank you. I'd like to thank the cabinet member for her response. I have to say it is not entirely consistent with my understanding. As you know, I'm a council-appointed trustee of the South London Gallery, and at the last couple of board meetings this has come up. The gallery are of the view that there were a number of their items, the items jointly owned by the council and the South London Gallery, that would have been in temporary storage in the old Town Hall site, because they would have been between locations, permanent locations, and that has been the custom. And they've tried to get information from the department, who understandably found it difficult to produce an inventory. But I wonder if you would go back to officers and say can they look at this again, because the Gallery's view is that there were works that were temporarily housed in that building complex, and they're very keen to find out what exactly they were?

RESPONSE

Thank you very much; I will do that, but I know that the storage was – is above the library, and that's where the storage is, and in the museum which of course we sadly actually we haven't got the analysis of what is missing, although we can suspect, there was no storage in that area; it's above the library. But I will get clarification.

22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR ALTHEA SMITH

Can she outline plans for events in Southwark for summer 2013?

RESPONSE

There is lots going on this summer in Southwark. I would encourage members to check out this summer's Southwark Life which has a section on events, and to keep up to date through our website. Some particular events to highlight include:

David's Peace Day, by David Idowu Foundation

Tabard Gardens

Saturday 13 July 2013 10am to 6pm

This is a peace event in the memory of David Idowu and all the victims of violent crime. The main concept of this event is to create awareness of knife and gun crime to the general public and how it can affect lives. A dance troupe of young people is performing.

Park-to-Park Ride, by Parpose Projects / Southwark Council

Wednesday 17 July 2013, 9am to 3pm

A circular cycle ride for school pupils starting and ending in Burgess Park, with pick up points for pupils in Dulwich Park and Peckham Park, culminating in a picnic in Burgess Park at lunch time.

Rotherhithe Festival, by Rotherhithe Festival Group

King George's Field

Saturday 27 July 2013, 11am to 9:45pm

One of Southwark Council's north of the borough events. It is a community event with face painting, a bouncy castle and live music in a stage, with a variety of arts, charity food and information stalls.

Biped's Monitor, by Arbonauts

Nunhead Cemetery

Wednesday 31 July to Sunday 4 August 2013, 8:30pm to 10pm

Biped's Monitor is a site specific, immersive performance taking place in the avenues, trees and chapel of Nunhead Cemetery at dusk. Biped's Monitor brings opera, installation and performance art to this magnificent cemetery.

Love Parks Week, by Friends of Nursery Row Park

Nursery Row Park

Sunday 4 August, 12:30pm to 4:30pm

A community event in the park, organised by the friends of Nursery Row Park with farm animals provided by Surrey Docks Mobile Farm, games, face painting and the chance to meet the animals.

The African Market Day, by The African Market Day

Goose Green

Saturday 17 August 2013, 12 to 9pm

Free community run event that provides an opportunity for ethnic minority business from the African Caribbean community to showcase their goods and services, alongside cultural activities such as drumming, storytelling and African dance.

The Elephant and the Nun, by Southwark Council

Peckham Rye Common, St Marys Churchyard, Camberwell Green and Peckham Square

Saturday 17 August 2013,

Celebrating the heart of Southwark from the Elephant and Castle all the way down to Nunhead. There will be four community events with live music, comedy, dance, mini outdoor cinema, fairground sideshows, food, arts and crafts, and storytelling.

Project BISCEY, Careers in the Park, by Project BISCEY

Burgess Park

Wednesday 21 August 2013, 12 to 6pm

An afternoon of career driven presentations and information stalls in an entertaining format or at least in a comfortable enjoyable setting. There will be a whole range of different career type representatives on the day: vocational courses/work, full time work, university, entrepreneurship, college, apprenticeships and consultancy services like CV surgery and career advice.

The Luna Cinema in Dulwich Park, by The Luna Cinema Ltd

Dulwich Park

Monday 26 August 2013, 7pm to 10pm

Open air cinema in Dulwich Park, screening Pretty Woman.

Free Film Festivals, by Free Film Festival

Peckham Rye Common

Friday 6 & Saturday 7 September 2013, 8 to 10:30pm

Friday 6 Sept – Free screening of a silent classic film with live soundtrack played by composer Neil Brand.

Saturday 7 Sept – Free bike-powered screening of a family-friendly film to be confirmed.

Peckham Rye Fete, by Friends of Peckham Rye Park

Peckham Rye Common

Saturday 7 September 2013, 12 to 5pm

Small scale traditional community fete with dog show, children's games, fancy dress parade, Punch and Judy show, tea tent, Pimms, beer and cider tent, and stalls including local traders and local charities.

Midsummer Festival, by Friends of Brimington Park

Brimington Park

Saturday 7 September 2013, 12 to 7pm

A community festival celebrating the good things about living in East Peckham, This includes local acts including singing, exhibitions, dancing, drumming, stalls and sports activities.

23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER

As we approach the one year anniversary of the London 2012 Olympics, what work has the council undertaken to ensure Southwark has a lasting Olympic legacy?

RESPONSE

The Olympic legacy is very much alive in Southwark and the Olympic legacy board aims to ensure that Southwark has an enduring legacy from 2012.

The board's prime objectives will ensure a legacy in terms of greater participation in sport and physical activity coupled with improved facilities being made available to our community. Recent figures demonstrate increased participation.

Between April 2012 and April 2013, which includes the Olympic period, the number of Southwark people performing 1 x 30 min of sport and active recreation per week rose against the same period last year from 36.5% to 37.9% according to Sport England's active people survey. Southwark is still one of only three London boroughs to increase participation since the measurement started in October 2005.

This exceeds both the London (currently at 36.0%) and the national average (35.2%) and means that over 4,000 additional Southwark adults are doing at least 1 x 30 mins of activity every week since the London 2012 Olympic Games finished. Our commitment to investing in improved facilities together with work delivered by the community sports service is helping to encourage more people to take up exercise.

The council's capital legacy fund provided £2 million of funding to improve a range of facilities across the borough. The facilities benefitting from this programme are:

- BMX track for Burgess Park - £150,000
- Bethwin Road playground - £95,000
- Camberwell Leisure Centre sports hall - £490,000

- Herne Hill velodrome - £400,000
- Sports ground development in Homestall Road - £175,000
- Peckham Town Football Club - £85,000
- Peckham Pulse disability pool hoist - £5,600
- Peckham Rye - £200,000
- Southwark Park athletics track - £370,000
- Trinity outdoor sports area in Camberwell - £30,000

Several of these projects are either now completed or near completion. Most are scheduled to be delivered by the end of the financial year. They are providing and will provide lasting benefits to communities right across our borough for years to come. The funding allocated to these projects has also successfully brought in a further £1 million of external funding.

In addition to the sporting legacy, the council has built on the spirit of the games through its work on volunteering. The council strategy for volunteering is now being implemented, as is the volunteer passport, a joint project between Southwark and Lambeth designed to increase volunteering in the cultural sector amongst people from black and minority ethnic communities.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER

I would like to thank the cabinet member for her answer, and I would like to ask a supplementary.

After the legacy projects are completed, what plans does the council have to keep people engaged in sport, and to keep the borough active?

RESPONSE

Thank you very much indeed Councillor Lauder. We are just about to publish, as soon as we come back from the summer break, a sport and physical activities strategy because the present one we have at the moment is coming to an end, with most of the objectives achieved. And that strategy will look at how we ensure in the future that more people in the borough than before are involved in some kind of sport and physical activity. We have more funding from Sport England through the ProActive programme to look at school facilities and see how they can be opened up to the community, we have more activities in primary schools, and we also have our own programme of supporting clubs and ensuring that they receive resources to improve the work that they do and the amount of people that are involved. I think what we are looking at is making sure that we absolutely maximise resources so that as many people as possible – I think it's quite difficult to describe a whole range of programmes in amongst – I can provide a written reply if you would like one, but I think – we are working on that.

24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR NORMA GIBBES

Given their great achievements in recent years, can the cabinet member provide an update on the performance of Southwark's young people at this year's London Youth Games?

RESPONSE

This weekend saw the finals of the London Youth Games. The organisers began to say this is Southwark's year half way through the day. They were right, and so I am very pleased to announce the fantastic news that "Team Southwark" made it to the top ten, finishing 9th overall.

Team Southwark has been improving year on year from 29th in 2009, to 15th last year and this year breaking into the top ten.

- Team Southwark claimed 11 top three victories (1st place: girls' basketball, water polo and boys' table tennis, 2nd place: boys' cross country, wheelchair basketball, 3rd place: boys' disability football, BMX, boys' handball, cycling, boys' football, girls' hockey)
- Entered 42 sports competitions across 26 sports
- Entered some new sports this year, which included weightlifting, girls judo and girls table tennis
- Achieved 19 top 10 finishes
- Engaged 363 young people in actual competitions and over 1,000 in the London Youth Games experience.

Congratulations to all our wonderful young people, their team managers and the Southwark sports development team for their very hard work in getting our teams together to achieve this result.

25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON

How will the Cuming Museum continue to carry out its exhibition and educational work while Walworth Town Hall is closed for the foreseeable future?

RESPONSE

The fire was a terrible blow to all those involved with work in the museum. It has been a priority to continue its events and outreach programme, which is being delivered from InSpire at St Peter's Church in Liverpool Grove.

The 2013 summer programme includes family events during the school holidays, arts and crafts workshops for adults and a regular Thursday morning event for under 5s. All events are free and no booking is required. Details are available on the council's website.

The council is currently identifying other premises to house a temporary museum space whilst the plans for the town hall's redevelopment are progressed.

26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR RENATA HAMVAS

What action has the council taken to deliver on its promise of cutting the cost of meals on wheels?

RESPONSE

We are on track to halve the price people pay for meals on wheels by May 2014, compared to the price people paid when we came into office in May 2010.

We have already reduced the price by over a third, and a further reduction to 50% will take effect by May 2014, in line with our promise.

This is a very important policy, ensuring vulnerable people get hot nutritious meals every day. It is even more important at the moment, given the large increase in the cost of living due to this government's failed economic policies.

27. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR REBECCA LURY

What is her reaction to the latest available data from Guy's and St Thomas' which shows that the number of people in accident and emergency being seen within four hours has fallen to 94.38%, below the previous Labour government's target of 98% and below even the Tory/Liberal Democrat government's downgraded target of 95%?

RESPONSE

It is completely unacceptable that Southwark residents are having to wait longer to be seen in accident and emergency (A&E).

A&E waiting times in England are at a 9 year high – the number of people waiting over four hours has more than doubled since this government came into office, including waiting in ambulance queues outside A&Es.

The government is taking resources away from the front-line to spend £3 billion on an unnecessary and unwanted top-down reorganisation of the NHS; 4,000 nursing posts have been lost since May 2010; and the government has watered down waiting time targets.

It is clear that this government is not putting patients first.

28. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU

What progress has the cabinet member made towards her commitment to create a new dedicated telephone line for people needing social care advice?

RESPONSE

We brought in a single phone helpline, where residents can get social care advice from experts, last year - in line with our promise. It has already successfully helped over 20,000 callers.

The single phone number (020 7525 3324) simplified services by replacing over 20 previous phone numbers.

The number is staffed by the council's team of social care experts who are able to offer immediate advice and support for over 90% of the calls first time, or are able to ensure the request is put to the right team who can call back as quickly as possible.

Callers can use the number to ask for help with a wide range of things, from requests for hand rails to reporting financial or physical abuse.

People can also go online for a free guide to the council's adult social care services and a range of other services in the community at:
www.southwark.gov.uk/mysupportchoices

The new helpline number is for calls relating to adult social care services only and residents requiring other council enquiries can use the main customer services number on 020 7525 5000 or email csc@southwark.gov.uk

29. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR CHRIS BROWN

The cabinet member has recently taken on responsibility for public health. Can she comment on the level of public health funding for Southwark?

RESPONSE

Responsibility for public health transferred from the NHS to local government on 1 April 2013. For 2013/14 Southwark will receive a ring fenced grant for public health to meet the cost of these new responsibilities of £21.809 million. However, it is unclear whether the resources allocated to fund these new responsibilities will be sufficient to meet the costs. Close revenue monitoring during 2013/14 will seek to identify any unfunded pressures.

Government data shows that Southwark receives less public health funding per head of population than boroughs that the government says have far lower health needs, like Kensington & Chelsea. This is disgraceful.

30. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER

How many adapted council properties are currently inhabited by persons without disabilities? What measures is the council taking to ensure that when adapted properties become available that persons with disabilities are given priority? How many adapted council properties have been authorised to be made 'un-adapted' in each of the last three years?

RESPONSE

Effective monitoring of this was introduced in 2011. Prior to this it was not established so the information provided is from that date.

On rare occasions properties with low level adaptations (such as just a level-access shower) are let to general needs clients but all that we call fully adapted properties (with wheelchair access) go to households with a medical need for an adapted home.

Since October 2011, 19 low level adapted properties have been let to general needs clients; 14 of these were housing association properties and five council homes. There is a regional scheme for recording adapted properties called LAHR (London Accessible Housing Register). This was adopted by Southwark in October 2011. Southwark advertise adapted properties separately to our general needs homes and households themselves are given a separate code from general needs clients. There are three different codes for different property types from fully adapted with a lowered kitchen (when main household member is a wheelchair

user), fully adapted with standard height kitchen (e.g. when the wheelchair user is a child and parents would undertake cooking) and where a property has some adaptations, such as a level access shower and stair lift and minimal steps to access. For those who use a wheelchair outside the home but have some mobility difficulties, we do our utmost to match clients to these specific property types based upon an assessment from Occupational Therapy or our own medical assessment service.

The council does not have a policy to 'un-adapt' properties because these properties are required for our most vulnerable residents and are generally in great demand. In the past, we have removed stair lifts and recycled them and have removed some external modular ramping where they are no longer needed, but this would not affect the rest of the adaptations in the property.

31. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL

The report on a strategy for primary expansion was due to come to cabinet several months ago according to the forward plan. The latest plan moves the decision again until July. What is the reason for the delay?

RESPONSE

The report was first proposed as an April decision on the forward plan. The report was subsequently deferred in order that the strategy and proposals could be effectively informed by the Department for Education funding announcement in March 2013 and the free school announcements towards the end of May 2013.

32. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER

How much has the council received from the government in each of the last three years for permanent expansion places in primary schools? How much has the council spent in each of the last three years and how much has the council carried over from year to year?

RESPONSE

	2010/11 (£ million)	2011/12 (£ million)	2012/13 (£ million)
Grant income	9.9	10.6	6.5
Capital spend	13.7	4.5	6.2
Carried forward	N/A	6.1	6.5

In addition we have committed £15 million to the expansion programme: £5 million in 2013/14 and £10 million in 2014/15.

There is however still likely to be a gap between the resources available and those required to meet the projected need for places. Officers will seek to source additional grant from the Department for Education. Should this not become available, or such additional grant is insufficient, any shortfall would need to be met from relevant section 106 or community infrastructure levy or through the council's own funding.

33. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON

How many children have been excluded from each secondary school in Southwark in each of the last three years? What has been the reason recorded for their exclusion? How many students were sent home for disciplinary reasons in each month of the last three years?

RESPONSE

The number of children excluded by secondary school over the past three years is set below:

	Exclusions – fixed term and permanent		
School	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Bacon's College	2	4	2
Globe Academy *	115	99	109
Harris Academy at Peckham	19	19	15
Harris Academy Bermondsey	3	4	4
Harris Boys' Academy East Dulwich	1	1	4
Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich	8	41	40
Kingsdale School	2	0	0
Notre Dame School	2	0	1
Sacred Heart RC Secondary School	36	27	44
St Michael & All Angels CE Academy	91	84	31
St Michael's Catholic College	23	10	2
St Saviour's and St Olave's School	2	1	2
The Charter School	38	28	22
The City of London Academy	5	13	8
The St Thomas the Apostle College	3	2	4
Walworth Academy	15	28	10
Total	365	361	298

The total number of exclusions by secondary school over the past three years is:

	Exclusions – fixed term and permanent		
Secondary school	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Bacon's College	2	4	3
Globe Academy *	198	180	190
Harris Academy at Peckham	22	21	26
Harris Academy Bermondsey	3	5	13
Harris Boys' Academy East Dulwich	1	1	6
Harris Girls' Academy East	14	70	67

Dulwich			
Kingsdale School	2	0	0
Notre Dame School	2	0	1
Sacred Heart RC Secondary School	49	44	63
St Michael & All Angels CE Academy	138	142	62
St Michael's Catholic College	29	13	2
St Saviour's and St Olave's School	2	1	3
The Charter School	60	36	30
The City of London Academy	6	16	14
The St Thomas the Apostle College	3	2	5
Walworth Academy	17	31	11
Total	548	566	496

* All-through school, primary and secondary.

The reason for exclusion is set out below:

	2011/12		
Secondary school	Fixed	Permanent	All
Physical assault against a pupil	102	9	111
Physical assault against an adult	9	1	10
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	36	16	52
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	81	4	86
Bullying	9	0	9
Racist Abuse	2	0	2
Sexual misconduct	14	0	14
Drug & alcohol related	14	2	16
Damage	12	1	13
Theft	19	0	19
Persistent disruptive behaviour	154	8	162
Other	2	0	2
Total	454	41	496

All exclusions by month for each of the past three years is set out below:

Secondary school	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
January	36	57	66
February	57	52	49
March	114	96	80
April	28	31	30
May	71	51	69
June	55	44	24

July	34	35	31
September	14	49	31
October	43	52	15
November	53	69	47
December	43	30	54
Total	548	566	496

The schools maintain records of exclusions, and notify the local authority of each exclusion.

We are working closely with all schools and academies to explore alternatives to permanent exclusions. The managed move forum has established a process whereby schools can agree to transfer young people at risk of exclusion to a new school in cases where it is considered that a fresh start in an appropriate setting could be successful. We are also working closely with our pupil referral unit to develop a range of preventative services.

It should be noted it is also Ofsted's role to challenge academies on their level of exclusions through either inspection or the annual risk assessment.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON

I notice on the – I'm looking at Bacon College, where it says that two members have been excluded in 2009/10, four in 2010/11 and two permanently, and I don't think these figures are correct, because I have been heavily involved in Bacon College, and I'm asking the member to look at that again, please.

RESPONSE

Thank you for your supplementary question, Councillor Nelson. I hear what you say. Obviously I can't give you an in depth answer now, but I promise that I will go back to officers and check these figures again. I'm glad to hear that you're a governor at the school, and I would be happy to talk to you about your interpretation and learn more from you about what you feel the correct figures are, and, probably more importantly, Mr Mayor, to try and delve deeper into the meaning of these figures, because it is important; and I think Councillor John said earlier on, how important it is for us to be working with our secondary schools.

As you know, most of them are faith schools or they are academies, so apart from influence, we have very little control over them, but this is a very important area that you have raised, and with your added knowledge as a governor, I am happy to work with you about how we can actually sort of see the reasons behind some of these figures, which I think is more important. But also, as I said, if you're saying that these figures are wrong for one particular school, I am happy to go back and clarify that with officers, Mr Mayor, and give Councillor Nelson a written response, if that's okay.

34. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GETTLESON

What is the number of children in care housed in private-run children's homes? What is the total cost to the council? What is the highest fee per child paid by the council to a private-run home?

RESPONSE

Number of children in private residential: 42
Annual expenditure: £5.85 million (2012/13)
Most expensive placement: £5,157 per week (disability placement).

35. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR NICK STANTON

What is the cabinet member doing to make the junction of George Row and Bermondsey Wall West safer?

RESPONSE

Our key objective for making the council's residential roads safer, including through the introduction of 20mph limits on borough roads, extends to George Row and Bermondsey Wall West.

The junction of George Row and Bermondsey Wall West was included within the recently introduced 20mph zone in Riverside area which also includes a number of other measures including one way westbound traffic with a pedal cycle contra flow at Pottery Street and one way northbound traffic working with a pedal cycle contra-flow in Wilson Grove. These combined measures are designed to reduce rat running, provide improved cycle routes and control the speed of traffic.

36. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR DENISE CAPSTICK

What consideration has the council given to give relief from parking permit charges to vehicles with very low emissions, further to the existing relief for hybrid or electric vehicles? Will the council consider coming into line with Transport for London (for Congestion Charges) and HMRC (for vehicle excise duty) by giving a permit discount to vehicles emitting 100g/km or less of CO2?

RESPONSE

We are of course committed to promoting more sustainable transport and travel, which means reducing the levels of air pollution. Currently, drivers of hybrid or electric vehicles receive a discount of 75% for resident and business parking permits. We are keen to ensure that residents are spared additional costs that could be brought on by policy changes and earlier this year froze all parking charges for the next 12 months.

The introduction of forms of relief for very low emission vehicles would be a development on existing policy. Clearly the more greener vehicles we can encourage onto our streets as replacements for existing more polluting vehicles, the greater the reductions in CO2 and other harmful emissions.

The council did undertake an initial consultation exercise through the community councils in May 2011 about CO2 based parking permits. Parking officers gave a presentation to each community council to gauge whether there was support for this to be instigated. At those meetings there was no clear support for this change and a number of objections were made. The decision was taken at the time not to pursue this to a full consultation of all permit holders.

Any change in policy in this area would need to be based on substantial evidence. As more data becomes available to support the effectiveness of introducing carbon based parking permit charging, we will consider whether there is a case to consult all residential permit holders on the introduction of such a scheme into this borough.

37. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER

How many parking penalty charge notices (PCNs) have been issued in the borough in each of the past three years? How many of these PCNs have been written off because of failure to collect the fine, and what are the primary reasons for fines not being collected on PCNs?

RESPONSE

	Issued	Paid	% Paid	Written off	% Written off
2012-13	102,212	72,781	71.2%	238	0.2%
2011-12	98,747	69,555	70.4%	6,189	6.3%
2010-11	100,615	67,612	67.2%	12,471	12.4%
2009-10	121,724	80,730	66.3%	19,684	16.2%
2008-09	131,743	84,597	64.2%	20,131	15.3%

The council wants any PCNs which are issued to be done so appropriately and fairly. Since taking control of the council the proportion which is being paid has risen from 66.3% to 71.2%.

The primary reasons for fines not being collected once they have become a debt is that information provided by the DVLA to the council about who owned the vehicle proves to be incorrect. Broadly speaking the vehicle owner at the time of the contravention has either moved, never lived at the address or does not exist.

PCNs which are cancelled at the stages before they reach the bailiff are neither considered debt nor are they written off. Again, one of the main reasons for cancellations will be incorrect returns from the DVLA.

Parking services has been concentrating on ensuring that appeals made at the formal and informal stages to the council are dealt with quickly and that the public are re-offered the chance to pay at the discounted rate if their appeal is unsuccessful. Parking services has also been concentrating on the quality of formal adjudication packs which go in front of the parking adjudicator at the Parking and Traffic Appeals Service and our success rate has improved considerably over the last 5 years.

This hard work is reflected in the payment rates for PCNs which have improved in each of the last five years.

38. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN

Will the cabinet member confirm that future paving repairs in Surrey Docks and Rotherhithe wards in areas with the brown-brick paving will, wherever possible, be replaced 'like with like', as agreed with the strategic director for environment and leisure in a site meeting on 7 May 2013 and in subsequent emails; thereby avoiding the use of tarmac that is eroding the character of the area?

RESPONSE

The council appreciates the importance of the character of the area and will look to options which preserve that. Unfortunately, the government continues to cut Southwark's budget and so we have to make hard choices about where to prioritise money. Therefore, sometimes the cost of replacing 'like with like' may become prohibitive. However, I can confirm that I have asked officers to work with local ward councillors to look across a range of solutions including cleaner greener safer bids.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN

I'd like to thank the cabinet member for his answer. I appreciate what you say about prohibitive costs, but in a lot of cases, the cost of replacing like with like is not prohibitive; particularly when we are talking about re-using existing bricks. In some cases, that can actually be cheaper than using tarmac. I've already discussed the cost side of it with the director of law and communities, and we've agreed that there are other ways we could possibly do this; and what I'm after in my question is political will to try to preserve the character of the area, by saying that where possible, and if we can find the additional funds that it takes, will you agree that that is the strategy for this area, please?

RESPONSE

Thank you Mr Mayor, and congratulations on your appointment as mayor. I'd like to reassure the member for Surrey Docks ward that this isn't about a political issue at all. She and her party was in power for eight years; she was in fact in my post for at least one year, and I don't know really what they did strategically about this issue during that time. We are very happy to come along and work with you in Surrey Docks ward and look at where we can replace like with like, but as she knows, these bricks are not easily available, and in some cases it may not be possible to replace them all the time.

39. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR DARREN MERRILL

Can the cabinet member confirm the numbers of properties lost from and added to the housing stock in 2012-13, and set out how that compares with previous years?

RESPONSE

The changes in the stock of council homes for 2012-13 are contained in Table 1 below.

For comparison, the data for a 10 year period is also included. There are a few points to note about the construction of the data:

- For each of the ten years, there has been a loss of stock; the summary part of the table shows the cumulative effect of the detailed columns to the right.
- There can be a net effect in the conversion and deconversion columns. If for example, three flats in a converted house have been deconverted, there will be an addition of one property in the conversion column, and three in the deconversion column.
- The buybacks column relates mainly to leasehold owned properties on regeneration estates. The buyback is a precursor to demolition, so is a temporary effect. The buyback and demolition do not necessarily occur in the same year.
- In the demolitions column, the units are entered in the year that they are removed from the housing stock, not necessarily when they are physically demolished

Year	SUMMARY				ADDITIONS (+)					REMOVALS (-)						
	Total Brought Forward	Total Carried Forward	Total Loss/Gain in Year	Cumulative Loss/Gain since 2002	New Build	Acquired	Conv	Buybacks	Total Additions	RTB Sales	Deconv	Demol	Dulwich Coll L/H	Amos Estate	Other Sales/Removals	Total Removals
02/03	47173	46055	-1118	-1118	78	3	3	1	85	975	5	110	59	0	54	1203
03/04	46055	44544	-1511	-2629	125	3	14	5	147	1458	18	152	12	0	18	1658
04/05	44544	42863	-1681	-4310	150	3	15	19	187	1742	8	93	0	0	25	1868
05/06	42863	41484	-1379	-5689	12	1	8	52	73	733	16	694	0	0	9	1452
06/07	41484	41026	-458	-6147	0	0	23	29	52	207	22	263	0	0	18	510
07/08	41026	40497	-529	-6676	1	0	33	28	62	180	0	359	0	3	49	591
08/09	40497	39827	-670	-7346	0	2	68	122	192	45	53	648	0	72	44	862
09/10	39827	39337	-490	-7836	0	0	35	82	117	23	15	434	0	59	76	607
10/11	39337	39062	-275	-8111	7	1	8	37	53	23	40	154	0	0	111	328
11/12	39062	38990	-72	-8183	3	0	18	17	38	24	0	30	0	0	56	110
12/13	38990	38787	-203	-8386	16	0	3	20	39	94	2	119	0	0	27	242
2002-2013	47173	38787	-8386		392	13	228	412	1045	5504	179	3056	71	134	487	9431

For 2012/13, one significant trend to note is the upturn in right to buy completions compared with the sales rates in recent years. This can be attributed to the increase in maximum discount for right to buy applications to £100,000. Most of removals from stock for demolition last year were on the Aylesbury Estate, as part of the ongoing regeneration scheme. Other sales, which are largely individual void properties, were less than in previous years; the sales continued to provide capital receipts for investment in the housing stock through warm, dry, safe and other programmes, but were supplemented last year by some larger land disposals in regeneration schemes.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR DARREN MERRILL

Can the deputy leader tell me how does he think the right to buy will affect our housing stock, and what he plans to do to try to alleviate the problem?

RESPONSE

Thank you Mr Mayor, I'm very grateful for Councillor Merrill's question in relation to this particular issue. I think it is quite pertinent for Councillor Merrill to raise this matter, given that if members look on page 30 at the table, where you can see between the year 2002 and 2010, the cumulative loss to the council was 7,836 properties. Obviously, as Councillor Hargrove said in the previous question, it was not under our guardianship at the time, but under the party opposite; and I'm sure they will account for that tremendous loss of council housing in the borough at the next election.

You will know that this government introduced a discount again, to tenants across the country, in order for them to revitalise the whole issue of right to buy. In the year before last, we had 23 applications for right to buy – sales, I should say, for right to buy; in the last year we had over 250. We expect at least the same number this year, and for it to grow because of the discount which is being given of £100,000. This is not the way to solve the housing crisis in this country or this borough. We heard this before from the SGTO. The way to solve the housing crisis in this borough and in this country is to build more council homes, and that's what this council is committed to.

40. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN

Why were Tupman House, Bardell House, Micawber House and Wade House on the Dickens Estate not prioritised for door entry systems even though they had more reports of crime and anti-social behaviour than other blocks which were put forward, particularly given that the issues had already been raised by ward councillors and the police? Will the cabinet member review the situation in these blocks given that residents are suffering break-ins, rough sleepers and vandalism and provide door entry systems?

RESPONSE

As part of a package of redirection measures cabinet approved a two year programme for door entry upgrades and renewals. A total of £726,000 per annum has been included in the base budget. The two year programme of works from 2013-2015 was also endorsed by area housing forums and tenant and home owners' councils.

However, the overall need across the borough for new door entry systems greatly outstrips the available funding. In the short-term the council has tried to strike a balance between installing complete 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. Accordingly, there are 51 upgrades and 21 new systems planned over the next two years.

The new systems were identified and prioritised at a point in time, taking on board police support, anti-social behaviour, crime, and in some cases ward member support. There are other blocks that would benefit from door entry systems but with a finite budget available the programme had to start with an initial number of blocks.

Officers are aware of the more recent problems residents of these blocks have been experiencing and will arrange to meet with residents to fully understand their concerns and explore the options available to find a solution.

41. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR TIM MCNALLY

How many council tenants in Chaucer ward are currently in a state of overcrowding listed by bands 1-3 and what number of council tenants are currently under-occupying?

RESPONSE

Tenants may be registered as statutorily overcrowded (Band 1), overcrowded and in insanitary conditions (Band 2), or overcrowded and have a medical need (also Band 2) or overcrowded (Band 3).

The numbers for Chaucer ward are as follows:

Chaucer Ward, July 2013	
Band 1, statutorily overcrowded:	1
Band 2, overcrowded and in insanitary conditions	1
Band 2, overcrowded and in medical need	8
Band 3, overcrowded	103

The number of tenants registered as under-occupying in Chaucer ward is 15.

42. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PODDY CLARK

How many council housing tenants have rejected offers to move to alternate council housing in each month in each of the last three years? What are the top three reasons given for refusal?

RESPONSE

The table below shows the number of refusals for each month for the last three years. The top reasons for refusing an offer are:

1. No response to offer/pre-allocation letter
2. Rooms too small
3. Condition of property
4. Personal reasons

Year	Month	Refusals
2010	July	362
2010	August	343
2010	September	310
2010	October	301
2010	November	216
2010	December	267
2011	January	224
2011	February	203
2011	March	287
2011	April	262
2011	May	277
2011	June	214
2011	July	259
2011	August	216
2011	September	210
2011	October	237
2011	November	185
2011	December	132
2012	January	158
2012	February	141
2012	March	200
2012	April	188
2012	May	263
2012	June	182
2012	July	282
2012	August	304
2012	September	192
2012	October	283
2012	November	322
2012	December	248
2013	January	329
2013	February	176
2013	March	221
2013	April	285
2013	May	272
2013	June	238
2013	July	41
Total		8830

43. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR COLUMBA BLANGO

Why does the cabinet member believe only 35% of respondents in a recent satisfaction survey were satisfied with the council's housing complaint handling performance? What is he doing to make sure this performance improves over the next year?

RESPONSE

Improving satisfaction levels in any area is always challenging, as customers are already dissatisfied that they have had to make an initial complaint. However, we believe we can improve satisfaction in this area and the customer resolution team have identified this as a key priority for this year.

We are currently undertaking a benchmarking exercise against the highest performers, to learn from their experience. While most organisations also report very low satisfaction from complainants, some organisations do extremely well and we want to understand what they are doing differently.

From our work to date there are a number of areas we have identified that will improve customer's experience of making a complaint. We have found there is a gap between the complaint being logged and an officer from the service contacting the customer. Those logging complaints now also acknowledge them and where possible assign them directly to an officer, to speed up the process.

We have begun running regular training sessions for front line officers who respond to complaints to improve their complaint handling. Some of the points customers have made in the surveys have been around basic customer service skills. The council is currently developing a programme of customer service training, but in the meantime the customer resolution team are also looking at introductory customer service training around the basics of customer care.

44. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR LEWIS ROBINSON

Would the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing management outline the steps taken by the council to promote the advantages to tenants arising from recent changes to the right to buy legislation?

RESPONSE

There are statutory provisions governing information to be given to tenants about the right to buy. The primary legislation was introduced in section 189 of the Housing Act 2004 with the detail contained in subsequent statutory instrument 2005/1735. Here is a link to the current webpage which reflects the booklet distributed to all council tenants in accordance with the legislative provisions:

http://www.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/download/345/buying_your_council_home

45. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL KYRIACOU

What is the total amount of compensation paid out by the council in each of the past three years for personal injury, loss or damage? Please list the 10 largest payments and the reasons for these payments in each of the last three years.

RESPONSE

The total amount of compensation paid out for the last three years is set out below, along with a summary of the ten highest payments in each of those years. For comparison, I have also included the same details for the previous four years.

You will note that the total paid out peaked in 2009 and the trend since then has been downward. The total for the last full year, 2012, was 60% of the 2009 level.

2006			2007			2008	
	Payment	Description	Payment	Description	Payment	Description	
1	£ 200,812.85	SUBSIDENCE	£ 50,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL - EMPLOYEE EQUIPMENT FAILURE	£ 52,565.56	SUBSIDENCE	
2	£ 28,000.00	HIGHWAY TRIP	£ 45,000.00	- EMPLOYEE	£ 42,500.00	SUBSIDENCE	
3	£ 24,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 23,712.84	HIGHWAY TRIP	£ 40,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	
4	£ 20,300.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 18,345.17	SUBSIDENCE	£ 37,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	
5	£ 16,000.00	DISREPAIR	£ 17,500.00	INJURY IN A PARK	£ 35,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	
6	£ 14,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 17,500.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 35,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	
7	£ 14,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 17,000.00	HIGHWAY TRIP	£ 34,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	
8	£ 13,250.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 16,500.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	£ 33,250.00	SUBSIDENCE	
9	£ 10,250.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 14,550.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 19,500.00	SUBSIDENCE	
10	£ 10,100.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 13,500.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 18,250.00	SUBSIDENCE	
Total	£ 826,538.29		£ 811,384.54		£ 1,184,233.61		

2009			2010		2011	
	Payment	Description	Payment	Description	Payment	Description
1	£ 65,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 105,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 32,000.00	SUBSIDENCE
2	£ 50,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL - EMPLOYEE PERSONAL INJURY -	£ 85,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 29,000.00	SUBSIDENCE
3	£ 37,528.03	EMPLOYEE	£ 85,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 26,250.00	SUBSIDENCE
4	£ 34,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 51,250.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 24,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL
5	£ 31,500.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 40,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 23,500.00	SUBSIDENCE
6	£ 29,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 30,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 18,000.00	SUBSIDENCE
7	£ 26,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 30,000.00	PERSONAL INJURY - EMPLOYEE	£ 15,000.00	PERSONAL INJURY - EMPLOYEE

		2009		2010		2011	
	Payment	Description	Payment	Description	Payment	Description	
8	£ 25,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 25,000.00	HIGHWAY TRIP	£ 14,000.00	DISREPAIR/PERSONAL INJURY	
9	£ 25,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	£ 22,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	£ 13,500.00	SUBSIDENCE	
10	£ 24,750.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 20,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 13,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	
Total	£ 1,459,905.08		£ 1,199,019.45		£ 723,138.60		

		2012		2013 to 5th July	
	Payment	Description	Payment	Description	
1	£ 28,000.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	£ 17,250.00	DISREPAIR	
2	£ 27,800.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 14,180.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	
3	£ 25,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 14,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	
4	£ 24,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 12,836.00	SLIP/TRIP/FALL	
5	£ 24,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 12,500.00	DISREPAIR	
6	£ 21,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 12,500.00	SUBSIDENCE	
		PERSONAL INJURY -			
7	£ 20,000.00	EMPLOYEE	£ 11,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	
8	£ 20,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 9,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	
9	£ 19,900.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 8,300.00	SUBSIDENCE	
10	£ 19,000.00	SUBSIDENCE	£ 8,205.00	INJURY IN A PARK	
Total	£ 882,278.89		£ 279,199.57		

46. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ROBIN CROOKSHANK HILTON

Will the cabinet member provide a full list of every police constable, sergeant, inspector, chief inspector listed by ward and cluster, including their public contact details and their police base?

RESPONSE

Defining and providing the public with detail of the neighbourhood policing offer is a matter for the police. There are, however, details currently available on the Metropolitan Police Service website which details the individual inspector, sergeant, dedicated police constable and police community support officer for each ward along with contact details. This can be found at the link below:

http://content.met.police.uk/Page/TeamFinder?scope_id=1257246764302

47. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR TOBY ECKERSLEY

Would the cabinet member for finance, resources and community safety outline the steps the council is taking to reduce any need for a council tax increase in the near future, and to learn from good practice shown by low-tax London boroughs, with particular reference to shared services and the tri-borough initiative of Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham?

RESPONSE

This administration has ensured that there have been no council tax increases since it took power, and aim to repeat this in 2014. We are therefore the only administration in Southwark's history not to increase council tax. We have therefore demonstrated that we will do all we can to reduce the need for increases in council tax.

Clearly the largest pressure on Southwark to increase council tax comes from the coalition government, which has chosen to cut local government more heavily than other parts of the public sector and has unfairly decided that councils with higher levels of deprivation, such as Southwark, should face far greater cuts in spending than more affluent areas: between 2010 and 2014, Southwark will have lost £249 per head compared to only £15 per head in Epsom and Ewell. So the most important thing we can all do to reduce the need for increases in council tax here in Southwark is to campaign for a Labour government in 2015.

On the specifics of shared services and cross-borough working, we have been working with neighbouring boroughs to explore those opportunities that might be available to us. To date, the shared service arrangements that we have entered into include:

- Introducing the Southwark and Lambeth barristers framework
- Establishing communications, shared with Westminster, as a social enterprise

- Sharing the new public health service with Lambeth, with a single director for the shared service

We are continuing discussions with Lambeth and Lewisham in particular to look at closer working on services, in particular those where a single council “salami-slice” approach to cuts could critically weaken expertise and cross-borough working would add resilience. The leader has asked Councillor Colley and I to take these discussions forward.

On the tri-borough initiative, this joint work between Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham councils is envisaged to save £33.4 million by 2014/15. It should be noted that since 2010, Southwark has already saved £43.3 million through efficiency savings (56% of the total savings made) and we understand that the savings recorded for the tri-borough initiative could also include similar efficiency savings. The jury is therefore still out on the scale of savings that tri-borough working will realise. Nevertheless, we will continue to watch their work with interest to see if there are further opportunities for efficiencies we should learn from.