

**SOUTHWARK COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**

**(ORDINARY MEETING)**

**WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014**

**URGENT QUESTION**

**1. URGENT QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

What is the total budget for the Childcare Commission launched on 25 March, and how will the costs be split between Lambeth and Southwark councils?

**RESPONSE**

Dame Tessa Jowell MP, the Leader of Lambeth Council Councillor Lib Peck and myself launched the Southwark and Lambeth Childcare Commission on Tuesday.

The commission will review existing policy and practice in childcare provision, with particular reference to the experience of parents, children and childcare providers in the central London boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth. The aim of the commission will be to examine the challenges and opportunities in this area and to make recommendations for changes to policy and practice at a national, regional and local level in order to secure childcare provision that:

- is accessible and affordable to parents
- supports parents to be economically active
- is flexible enough for the 24 hour economy and working patterns of parents
- delivers quality education and development for children in the early years
- delivers an appropriate offer for older children.

The cost of the commission will be split equally between Southwark and Lambeth. We are yet to agree a budget, but this will depend upon factors such as the scope of the commission, secretariat required and whether research support is provided within the Councils or through an outside agency such as a think tank. We are currently discussing these with Dame Tessa as the chair of the commission.

Officers are currently looking at the process of joint decision making between Southwark and Lambeth when we will agree issues such as budget and the full scope of the commission.