

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**  
**(ORDINARY)**  
**WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2014**  
**MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE DALE**

What feedback have you had from members of the public who attended the first Leader's Public Question Time last month?

**RESPONSE**

The first Leader's Public Question Time was a resounding success, with around 225 people taking the opportunity to come along to the event and put their questions to me as leader of the council.

Following the effective collapse of the opposition in Southwark in May's elections, the administration has been looking at ways to ensure that the public is able to hold the council to account. It is disappointing that despite cross party agreement for the event, only three Liberal Democrat councillors could be bothered to show up.

Following the question time, officers sent a survey to members of the public (excluding councillors) who attended. The survey found that:

- Eight out of ten of those responding agreed or strongly agreed that event was an opportunity to hold the Leader to account for the running of the borough.
- 92% said they would attend this or a similar event in the future.

I am very pleased by this overwhelming response, but have asked officers to see what more we can do to promote future events and ensure even more people can be involved and ask questions.

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

How many wheelchair-adapted shared ownership properties have been approved as part of planning applications in the borough in each of the last three years and how many of those have subsequently been provided as non-wheelchair-adapted properties?

**RESPONSE**

Planning policies require 10% of all housing to be wheelchair accessible to the adopted South East London Housing Partnership standards across all tenures. This is secured by condition and section 106 planning obligation.

Developers occasionally seek release from these obligations following a period of marketing to the target group. Information on how the units have been marketed is closely scrutinised before agreement is given to this.

We do not currently monitor these changes to the provision of adapted units but we are aware of the difficulties that developers and registered providers have in finding occupiers that need these adaptations. For this reason we are currently working on reviewing this standard so that housing adaptable for a range of needs and disabilities can be provided and not just wheelchair adaptation. We have also consulted on a draft section 106 planning obligations and community infrastructure levy supplementary planning document which says that where the provision of 10% wheelchair accessible housing is not achievable we will seek a section 106 planning obligation from the developer to contribute towards the adaptation of other homes in the borough to meet the needs of people with a range of disabilities.

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MITCHELL**

It is now three years since the Holmhurst Day Centre on the corner of Half Moon Lane and Burbage Road was closed. What plans has the council for this valuable community asset other than to house licensed squatters, and when might we see those plans come to fruition?

**RESPONSE**

We plan to use the building to support adults with learning disabilities.

A number of Southwark adults with learning disabilities are living at various locations across the country and would like to move back to the borough to be closer to friends and family. The council has commissioned a feasibility study to develop plans for an in-borough care service for adults with learning difficulties which includes plans to refurbish Holmhurst Day Centre to meet the needs of these service users.

Subject to the feasibility study and, if appropriate, success of a planning application for change of use of the building, the process would likely take approximately 18 months.

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR KATH WHITTAM**

Can the leader give an update on the council's ongoing challenge against the Thames Super Sewer?

**RESPONSE**

The council issued its application for judicial review against the decision of the Secretaries of State on 24 October 2014. This application was also served on Thames Tunnel Utilities and the London Borough of Newham as interested parties.

The court has indicated that the decision is subject to two other legal challenges although these are not connected with the challenge from Southwark.

A response in reply is due by 27 November 2014. Once that is received, it is expected that there will be an application from the Treasury Solicitor for an expedited hearing. The timescale is somewhat difficult to predict since the case will come before the relatively new Planning Court which came into being earlier in 2014 with the intention of speeding up decisions of this nature.

## **5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

How does he plan to measure his administration's pledge to create a) 5,000 new jobs and b) 2,000 new apprenticeships for Southwark residents over the next four years? Please will the leader provide a list of all the businesses in the borough that offer apprenticeships?

### **RESPONSE**

The draft council plan as agreed by cabinet in July 2014 includes commitments to support 5,000 more local people into jobs and create 2,000 new apprenticeships by 2017/18. The draft plan is being consulted on and will come back to council assembly in February.

We will meet this commitment through a range of projects and commissioned employment support. Like all our commitments, these will have targets which we will monitor and report back through the council's performance monitoring process and then publish annually in the council's performance report.

The council does not hold a list of businesses that offer apprenticeships which has historically been held by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS). However, the council keeps a list of contractors who take on apprentices through the Southwark Apprenticeship Scheme and as a result of section 106 commitments. Some of the contractors listed are national organisations who have a presence in Southwark to deliver contracts for the council. The current list is below.

#### **Contractor/partner**

A & E Elkins  
Balfour Beatty  
Berkeley Group  
Capita  
Conway Aecom  
J.A. Stott Carpentry Ltd (Lend Lease subcontractor)  
Interserve  
Keepmoat Group  
Laing O'Rourke  
Lend Lease (subcontractors)  
Lendlease/BeOnsite  
London & Quadrant  
Mace  
Mears Group  
Network Rail  
Nottinghill Housing  
OCO Limited  
Quadron  
Saltash Enterprises  
SCCI Alphatrack  
Southwark Building Services - now in house  
Spokemead Maintenance Ltd  
T Brown  
Watkin Jones

**6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JANE LYONS**

Will the leader provide an update on the progress of his plans for free swimming for all Southwark residents, especially having regard to the timeline and the cost to the council's budget?

**RESPONSE**

Physical inactivity is an independent risk factor to multiple health problems including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some types of cancer. Regular physical activity is therefore one of the most important things that people can do to benefit their health and also reduces the long term financial and health care burden that results from conditions that might in fact be preventable.

In making our pledge to provide free swimming and gym use to people that live in the borough, we want to reach out to those not currently exercising and also ensure that they are not put off by leisure centre costs that might be unaffordable for them.

Progress is already being made on identifying the different ways through which we can deliver on the commitment to ensure that residents have access to free swimming and gym use. This includes proposals for piloting elements of the offer as soon as possible.

Our current leisure provider's contract is due to end in 2016, so we are looking to introduce free swimming and gyms alongside any new arrangements. I expect the pilot elements to start during 2015. The details of all this will be presented to cabinet for a decision in January 2015.

At present, alongside considering the structure of the free leisure offer, we are also considering a number of potential funding sources. Whilst indicative costs have been identified, the final cost will not be known until options for the programme have been agreed.

**7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CHARLIE SMITH**

Can the leader tell me what the council is doing to support a new secondary school on the Dulwich Hospital site?

**RESPONSE**

The council is working with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to agree a programme for the development of a new secondary school within the Dulwich Hospital site. The EFA have confirmed that they support and share the council's aspirations for the development of this site.

The whole of the site is owned by the NHS and the EFA are leading on negotiations on the basis that it will be their responsibility to purchase the site and select the free school provider. This means that the council has no direct control over the timing of the development but will seek to influence the outcome, so places are provided to meet the need in Southwark.

The EFA have now begun the competitive process of selecting the free school provider for the Dulwich site, including bids from Haberdashers and Charter, who have submitted applications. An announcement is expected in March 2015.

Officers are of the view that the Dulwich site on its own will not be sufficient to meet the demand for secondary school places in the borough from 2018/19, which could be between eight and eleven forms of entry, as the growth in the primary sector works its way through. Other sites are therefore under investigation.

Last month the council amended the draft Southwark Plan to make clear the council's preference for a new secondary school on the hospital site, alongside the new NHS health centre. The amended plan sets out clearly that any remaining land on the hospital site should be used for a secondary school alone, once the NHS has determined the amount of space needed for a new health centre.

Labour councillors are also backing a petition to David Laws MP, calling on the Minister not to press ahead with plans for a new primary school on the site, which will compromise the space which is available for a new secondary school.

**8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

What discussions has the leader had since May 2014 regarding the introduction of free public wi-fi to Southwark? Will he consider piloting such a scheme in the borough's commercial, tourist and shopping areas such as Lordship Lane in East Dulwich?

**RESPONSE**

Our priority has been to deliver superfast broadband to the Rotherhithe peninsular which we are continuing to work on. Most recently I have met with the Mayor of London, providers and other boroughs to look at what needs to happen to meet this commitment.

We are also using this work as an opportunity to look at the feasibility of free public wi-fi. While our focus remains on the delivery of broadband in areas that do not have adequate broadband speeds, we would certainly not rule out other opportunities to increase public access to the internet if they were feasible.

**9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JOHNSON SITU**

A Liberal Democrat councillor was quoted in the South London Press saying he was concerned that the new Cycling Strategy didn't include 'a single penny' of funding to make improvements. Can the leader confirm how much money has been allocated for cycling in Southwark?

**RESPONSE**

It is disappointing that the Liberal Democrats are once again talking down the borough and the exciting work that is being done to make cycling more accessible to people throughout Southwark. We are consulting with our residents on what we can do to increase cycling in our borough, including which routes need to be improved and made safer. We will adopt the final strategy in March next year and this will include a detailed action plan of what steps we will take.

The draft cycling strategy is currently out for consultation until 1 February 2015. The strategy proposes the following key measures:

- More than doubling the current level of cycling in Southwark by 2025/26
- Year on year reductions in the cyclist casualty rate
- The provision of attractive routes away from large vehicles or fast moving traffic
- The provision of physical segregation, signal priority, road space re-allocation, traffic calming and filtered permeability measures as required
- The delivery of the Southwark Spine – a new cycle route running the length of the borough – complementing other existing and planned networks.
- Securing delivery of a comprehensive borough-wide cycle network by linking the cycling strategy to the New Southwark Plan
- Reaching out to those who currently do not cycle and creating a truly inclusive cycling culture.

We have allocated £2 million of capital to improving cycling infrastructure in our borough, with a significant proportion of this funding the new Southwark Spine cycle route. It also worth noting that already, the council has spent between 38 and 48% of its Transport for London (TfL) funded transport improvement programme on cycling, or cycling related schemes over the last 4 years.

#### **10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAMIAN O'BRIEN**

What specific plans does the council have to install segregated cycle lanes on council-managed roads over the next twelve months?

#### **RESPONSE**

##### **Quietway 1 (Waterloo to Greenwich)**

Implementation of this route, which will be the first Quietway in London, is scheduled for spring 2015. Implementation includes a fully segregated section of cycle lane in Tabard Street from the junction of Pilgrimage Street eastbound to Becket Street. The total length is approximately 120m. This is part of a comprehensive package of measures along this corridor east/west across the northern end of the borough. Other measures include junction improvements, improvements or formalisation of existing motor-traffic free routes, public realm improvements and improved pedestrian facilities.

The following schemes are all currently under public consultation with a view to implementation in mid-2015:

##### **Crystal Palace Parade**

This scheme involves the implementation of measures to improve safety and accessibility at the junctions of Crystal Palace Parade, Fountain Drive, Westwood Road and Sydenham Hill. The measures include the provision of approximately 300m of segregated cycle facilities around the junctions together with new pedestrian and cycle crossing points.

## **East Dulwich Grove/Townley Road Junction Improvements**

The key aim of the proposals is to significantly improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians at the junction, whilst ensuring that there is no adverse delay to traffic on East Dulwich Grove. As part of this is it proposed to improve cycling facilities at the junction including approximately 35m of semi-segregated cycle facilities.

## **Wells Way**

This proposal aims to improve walking and cycling as well as improving the general public realm in the area. A northbound contra-flow cycle lane is proposed at Wells Way between Southampton Way as part of the cycle improvement.

The cycle lane will be segregated from southbound traffic on the approaches to the junctions with Southampton Way and Cottage Green. A new cycle-only right turn will be introduced at the Southampton Way / Wells Way junction to facilitate the contra-flow cycle lane. The length of the cycle lane is approximately 110m with the segregated sections totaling 35m.

## **Quietways**

In addition to the Waterloo to Greenwich (Quietway 1) outlined above, the following routes are planned for delivery by the end of 2016, subject to funding confirmation from TfL and public consultation:

- A Quietway route from Elephant and Castle to Crystal Palace
- A Quietway route from Southwark station to Canada Water with link from Bermondsey to Blackfriars
- A Quietway route along the Thames Path
- A Quietway link from Kennington Park (Lambeth) to Peckham via Burgess Park
- A Quietway link from the pilot Waterloo - Greenwich route (north of Burgess Park) to Honor Oak Park (Lewisham) via Peckham
- A Quietway link from Dulwich to Nunhead.

Quietways will be designed to overcome the most important barriers to cycling. As part of this, segregated facilities will be provided as required. For example, as part of the Elephant and Castle to Crystal Palace Parade Quietway, segregated facilities are currently being considered at:

- The junction of Portland Road and Albany Road
- Camberwell Grove at the junction with Grove Hill Road
- Champion Hill/ Greendale
- Dulwich Village/ Court Lane/ Turney Road junction
- Improving the existing segregated facilities on Farquhar Road.

## **Recently implemented schemes in last 12 months**

### **Greendale segregated cycle route**

Extension of the existing segregated cycle route from Greendale, across Denmark Hill, to connect Dulwich and Ruskin Park in Lambeth. The scheme includes:

- New segregated cycle track connecting Greendale cycle route with Denmark Hill
- New crossing signal crossing for cyclists and pedestrians on Denmark Hill
- Speed reduction measures on the section of Denmark Hill, between Blanedowne and Ferndene Road
- Mandatory cycle lane between Champion Park and Champion Hill, connecting with the existing southbound bus lane.

#### **Paxton Green Roundabout**

Improve safety conditions for cyclists and pedestrians using the roundabout, particularly pupils cycling to school. The scheme includes:

- Provision of off carriageway cycling segregated facility to link Alleyn Park with Dulwich Wood Avenue (an existing cycling route)
- Provision of wider and safer crossings for pedestrians and cyclists on all arms of the roundabout.

#### **11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR RADHA BURGESS**

The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) has responded to Southwark Council's campaign to increase the number of dedicated local police officers in the borough by denying that the number has decreased. Can the leader reassure me that the council's figures are robust and that he will continue to campaign to restore police numbers in Southwark?

#### **RESPONSE**

I am surprised that MOPAC are questioning the figures – as they are their figures.

According to MOPAC's published figures, there were 958 officers in 2010, reducing to 759 in 2014 a reduction of 199.

The Police and Crime Plan 2013-2016 projects total Southwark strength in 2015 to be 816. This means that there is currently a shortfall of 57 officers on the 2015 projection (816 -759).

Southwark records some of the highest number of total notifiable offences across the London boroughs. The reduction in dedicated police officers for the borough is a concern for the council and residents as highlighted by the 1,700 signatories of the petition to restore the numbers to the levels in 2010/11.

#### **12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES OKOSUN**

Will the leader please provide an update on the work of each of his deputy cabinet members, including what activities, including meetings, they have undertaken so far, and what the main priorities are for each in 2014/15?

#### **RESPONSE**

I have appointed four deputy cabinet members for the current year, who are each working on specific pieces of work to support me and the cabinet.



I do not keep a list of meetings that any councillor attends, but focus on what they deliver in their role. I have set out some of the highlights of each deputy cabinet member's work below:

**Councillor Stephanie Cryan**

**Deputy Cabinet Member for Financial Inclusion**

- Working alongside Councillors Fiona Colley and Ian Wingfield on delivering our commitment to a £10 Credit Union Account for all 11 year olds
- Promoting financial inclusion in Southwark, including through the Citizens Advice Bureaux Financial Inclusion Forum; at the Southwark Revenue and Benefits Conference and with Community Councils
- Working with the healthy communities scrutiny sub-committee on the link between health and financial wellbeing.

**Councillor Radha Burgess**

**Deputy Cabinet Member for Women's Safety**

- Leading on the delivery of the Women's Safety Charter, which Cabinet approved last week
- Promoting and encouraging participation in the council's consultation on harassment via appearances at community councils, use of social media and in person at a street stall
- Consulting with the public and licensed premises to secure support across the borough for a new charter.

**Councillor Leo Pollak**

**Deputy Cabinet Member for Excellence in Design**

- Developing new detailed guidance on design, procurement and monitoring principles for the upcoming delivery of new council homes, working with Councillors Richard Livingstone and Mark Williams
- Developing measures to increase the frequency, influence and effectiveness of our design review panels, and establishing a design review sub-group for new council developments.

**Councillor Jamille Mohammed**

**Deputy Cabinet Member for Inter-Faith Community Relations**

- Leading on the delivery of a Southwark Open Faith day – which took place on 22 November as "i-Witness"
- Engaging faith organisations to establish better links and understanding between faiths
- Working with officers to develop a Southwark 'faith directory'.

I welcome the decision by the overview and scrutiny committee to interview deputy cabinet members as part of the annual scrutiny process, and ensure that members have an opportunity to question them on their work.

**13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JAMILLE MOHAMMED**

Southwark Works recently celebrated its tenth anniversary of support local people to find work. What impact has this initiative had over the last decade?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Works supports Southwark residents who are furthest from the labour market into work. Support is targeted at those with the most complex needs,

including young people (18-24), the over 50's, people with health related conditions, residents worst affected by welfare reforms and ex-offenders.

In 2014, Southwark Works celebrated its tenth anniversary of supporting local people into work. In that time, it has provided support to well over 12,000 people. Since 2008/2009, 2383 residents have been supported into work as a direct result of the support offered by Southwark Works.

**14. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR KIERON WILLIAMS (CAMBERWELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Camberwell Community Council is worried about the reduction in police officers in Camberwell and Southwark more widely. What is the council doing to ensure that there are adequate police numbers in our borough and Camberwell specifically?

**RESPONSE**

There are 36 officers which form the south west cluster local policing team, which covers the Camberwell area. This includes a named sergeant and five police officers per ward, which included the three Camberwell wards and the three Dulwich wards. In addition there should be 12 PCSOs in the south west cluster. At present there are six. The team is based at Camberwell Police Station. Each ward has a dedicated police officer and police community support officer, who are permanently based in the ward during their shift.

The council has lobbied the Mayor of London to increase the Southwark strength to the levels that were in place in 2010/11. The council has been running a petition to restore the number of officer to previous levels in 2010/11. To date the petition has received 1,700 signatories. This will be presented to the Mayor's Office.

I would urge anyone concerned about the Mayor's cuts to Southwark's policing to sign our petition.

**15. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BILL WILLIAMS (BERMONDSEY AND ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

What is the council going to do in response to the Thames Tunnel decision [by Government ministers Eric Pickles and Liz Truss] in Chambers Wharf?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Council has throughout the inquiry process contested the proposal from Thames Water to install a drive shaft for the Thames Tunnel at Chambers Wharf.

All five Examining Inspectors concluded after almost six months of hearing from experts and residents that the construction of a drive shaft would have very significant noise impacts for the locality. In the council's view the decision from the Secretaries of State failed to have proper regard either of the findings of the Examining Inspectors or for the alternative routes which had been suggested.

Accordingly, the council has decided to apply for a judicial review of the decision by the two Secretaries of State. This application was issued in the High Court on 24th October and the response from the Treasury Solicitor (who is acting for the Secretaries of State) is presently awaited. No date has as yet been set for a hearing.

Separately from the legal challenge, the leaders of the three political parties at Southwark wrote a letter to the two Secretaries of State on 16 October suggesting that a meeting would be helpful “to explore the opportunities for finding resolution.” The only response to these letters has been from the Treasury Solicitor who addressed the reply to legal services at Southwark. This indicated that the Secretaries of State “do not think that there is any merit in holding discussions.”

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

Are the changes to local NHS services, increased waiting times and access to treatment impacting on the council services, and what is that impact?

**RESPONSE**

The government has made a number of changes to NHS services which are impacting on the level of demand for social care which the council provides. This is against a backdrop of the government cutting the money Southwark has available to pay for adult care services. Alongside these changes, other factors will also contribute such as population changes.

In Southwark, between 2011-12 and 2013-14:

- The population of people aged 65 and over has increased by 5% since 2011;
- The number of referrals to Adult Social Care has increased by 33% over the same period, with referrals from secondary health care accounting for the greatest increase;
- The number of new social care clients assessed increased by 26% over the three-year period, with a particular increase in the number of people with physical disabilities and older people;
- The number of people supported by social care services increased by 14% over the three-year period.

The coalition government’s disastrous management of the health service also means that people are waiting longer for treatment. At Kings College Hospital for example one in five Southwark patients wait more than 18 weeks from referral to treatment – despite the excellent staff who are working incredibly hard to serve the health of our community.

Delays in accessing NHS care will impact on children and adults with healthcare needs who also have a current or potential social care need. For example, a person who needs orthopaedic surgery to improve their mobility may need social care support to enable them to remain independent in their own home pending a final good outcome to the surgery. Delaying surgery will increase the length of time such support is required before surgery. Potentially, delayed surgery may lead to a poorer final outcome, meaning that social care support is also required for a longer period after surgery.

Government cuts now are creating more expensive and longer term problems for people with health and care needs. The government’s is putting the NHS through a complex and costly reform, whilst at the same time starving local council’s of cash. This is creating pressure and impacting on the health and wellbeing of our

residents. As with many of the government's policies it will hit vulnerable people the hardest.

**17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR ELEANOR KERSLAKE**

Can the cabinet members guarantee that the council will continue to protect the most vulnerable in Southwark despite the government's withdrawal of funding for emergency support?

**RESPONSE**

Since the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government introduced these disproportionate cuts this administration has endeavoured to assist the most defenceless in our borough.

The Southwark Emergency Support Scheme provides assistance to residents in crisis – providing emergency cash, food and goods to people in desperate need. Local authorities took over providing crisis support from DWP in April 2013 and since then we have supported more than 3000 cases and 853 individuals to date, spending over £1m to provide this safety net.

The scheme is delivered in partnership with key voluntary sector organisations such as PECAN, St Giles and CAS. We believe this has resulted in a scheme that is both efficient and effective - with low administrative costs and reaching those in greatest need.

The government's welfare reforms are continuing to bite and we are seeing increasing numbers of applications to the scheme. Half of the referrals are made by the Job Centre Plus and it is worrying to hear from officers that JCP benefit sanctions may be one of the key drivers of demand!

In 2013-14 and 2014-15 the government provided specific grant funding for the provision of local welfare schemes. Government recently issued a consultation document on future funding proposals but did not offer an option to retain a ring fenced grant for the purposes of the local welfare provision. They have also threatened that the retention of any specific grant would be at the expense of funding cuts that they would impose elsewhere.

Despite this on 18 November 2014 cabinet agreed to allocating £2.7m funding to retain the Southwark Emergency Support scheme funds for at least the next three years at existing levels and I can guarantee that this administration will continue to do all we can to protect our most vulnerable residents.

**18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR LEO POLLAK**

The council's revenues and benefits team recently won a gold award from the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation. Can the cabinet member tell me how this service has improved since it was brought in-house in 2011?

**RESPONSE**

The council's revenues and benefits services was brought back in-house on 1 April 2011 following 13 years of operating through an outsourced contract. Despite

some staff transferring back from the supplier the council had over 100 vacancies to fill, a new IT system change and revised operating procedures to implement.

The service transferred back successfully on 1 April 2011 and ever since the division has worked to improve the overall income for the council more efficient council tax and business rates collection. Furthermore, work has been undertaken to improve the customer experience, maintain and develop the service for those applying for or in receipt of housing benefit or council tax support.

The award was recognition to the fact the council has improved council tax collection rates by 2.3% over the last three years to 95% in 13/14 and improved on business rates collection to 98.4%.

In 2010/11 our council tax collection rate was 92.70% and the amount collected was £88.9m. In 2013/14 our collection rate was 95.04% and the amount collected was £100.4m, £11.5m more than in 2010/11.

Housing benefit performance for new claims processing has remained consistent despite welfare reform increasing workloads by over 20% and at the end of 2013/14 was in the second quartile for performance across London. The overall indicator for housing benefit processing performance has improved by 8 days to on average 9 days.

The council also in-sourced its customer service centre for revenues and benefits in June 2013. This has reduced waiting time at peak times from 10 minutes to 1 minute and significantly improved the quality of call handling. The service has actively promoted the use of e-forms for customer contact and now has the top five most accessed forms in the council.

Over the last two years throughout the changes associated with welfare reform the council has maintained service delivery and:

- Implemented a Southwark emergency support and hardship scheme assisting over 3000 vulnerable customers;
- Provided for a council tax support scheme following the localisation of council tax benefit;
- Assisted customer affected by the bedroom tax and benefit cap;
- Continued to provide support to those most vulnerable through the provision of the "Rightfully Yours" service.

Since taking the service back in-house the service has seen a dramatic reduction in the amount of comments/complaints received and remains committed to ensuring this continues. The service has also employed 18 apprentices who have all gained a professional qualification.

Whilst receiving the award is recognition of the hard work and commitment staff has given to date the service remains committed to continue to improve performance for the residents of Southwark.

**19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JON HARTLEY**

Southwark's budget has been cut by a quarter over the past four years. How much more is the government likely to cut the council's budget and how will the cabinet

member ensure that frontline services will be protected in light of the savings that will have to be made?

## **RESPONSE**

The cuts from central government continue to be severe and devoid of any proportionate logic. Southwark remains one of the worst affected local authorities in London.

Since 2010 we have had to save more than £90m from our budgets, a quarter of our annual general fund budget. Sadly these deep cuts are continuing. We estimate that our budget gap for next year is £31.4m and that if London Councils' forecasts are realised we will see similar reductions in funding in the following two years. If this is the case then by 2018 our annual general fund budget will be half the size it was in 2010!

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research recently stated: "the financial outlook for local government after the general election is pretty dreadful."

The October policy and resources report outlined the measures the council is taking to try to protect front line services, including using £6.2m of reserves to support the 2015/16 budget and carefully considering the likely income from council tax and business rates. Most of all we are putting value for money at the heart of our Fairer Future Promises and seeking to modernise our organisation and services to ensure we can continue to deliver the high quality front line services our residents need.

### **20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN**

Will the cabinet member provide an update on the council's plans to refurbish the Seven Islands Leisure Centre which it has allocated around £8 million for over the coming years in its capital budget?

### **RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PARKS AND LEISURE**

We have recently agreed the capital refresh report to cabinet. This took account of the need to maintain Seven Islands Leisure Centre as well as improve standards of the facilities there. We also recognise the significant opportunity presented by the nearby Canada Water regeneration, where proposals are developing to provide a new leisure centre in the area.

In reference to the later scheme coming forward, we are varying the allocation for Seven Islands Leisure Centre to £2 million for improvements, and if required releasing any further required funding whilst we await the completion of a brand new leisure facility on the Canada Water regeneration site.

### **21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES**

What recent discussions has the council had with contractors regarding paying the London Living Wage to their staff? Which contractors, if any, is the council aware of that are not yet paying London Living Wage to staff?

## **RESPONSE**

This administration remains committed to delivering the London Living Wage, not only through our contracts but also to our own staff. We are delighted by the progress that we have made since 2010 and the differences that we hope that we have made to the lives and well being of many of the valued staff employed by our contractors.

Since we made our commitment, all new contractors have been contracted to make these payments to their own staff working exclusively on council business. Similarly, any contract extensions have required the payment of the London Living Wage (LLW). Where possible, longer term contracts have been varied to deliver LLW to the contractors' workforces. There remain complexities within some of our contracts, especially where staff are employed by contractors to work on a number of contracts, not least where London Living Wage is not required by their other customers – we continue to work with these contractors as we move increasingly towards the end of these contracts.

We have gone further though. We have already made progress towards implementation of the ethical care charter for homecare workers. This work will continue over the coming months and I am very confident that we will make further progress to improve the lives of those staff affected, their employers and most importantly the customers that they serve.

## **22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES**

Can the cabinet member tell me how she will ensure that residents in Southwark are able to have their say on how the council prioritises its spending in light of the ongoing, severe cuts from central government to the council's budget?

## **RESPONSE**

This autumn we have been running a series of community conversations across the borough to talk to residents about how the council spends its budget. Every year since 2010 we have asked for, and listened to, residents views when we put the budget together to make sure we invest in the services that our residents value most.

The round of budget challenges with our residents involve at least 10 public community conversation events including collecting residents views at each of our community councils, an online budget simulator and meetings and events with the voluntary sector and other partners.

The present round of consultation builds on our previous spending challenge exercises where residents told us the methodology worked well.

As well as the official events there has also been an informal discussion at the Youth Council, where members could participate in a cheque exercise after a discussion, there was also a stall at East Street Market last weekend. On 6 December 2014 residents of the borough are invited to pop down to North Cross Market and engage in a discussion. I have met with Southwark Voices and there will also be consultation with Southwark Pensioners Forum and the Forum for Human Rights and Equalities to ensure that we have as broad a range of opinion as possible.

**23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL**

Will the cabinet member provide an update on the council's free swimming and gym pledge? Has the cabinet member now calculated the cost to the council purse of fulfilling the pledge and has she determined where this funding will come from?

**RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PARKS AND LEISURE**

See question 6.

**24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER**

Will the cabinet member provide a full schedule of occasions when the council's IT systems have failed to work properly since May 2014?

**RESPONSE**

In any organisation with a large IT system the IT helpdesk will get calls every day where users experience problems – some affecting a single user, and other larger ones affecting bigger parts of the business. As each of these is an occasion when the IT system has not worked properly, I expect that the councillor is more concerned about larger challenges that our IT system faces rather than every issue reported.

I refer him to my response to question 12 at the council assembly meeting on 16 July 2014.

Since then, I remain concerned by the performance of the council's IT how this can impact on our staff and our services. There remains a need for Capita, the council's main contractor, to deliver their contracted outcomes. To this end we have held meetings with them since July and will continue to do so in the period leading up to the roll out.

The performance of IT systems and the Capita contract continues to be monitored closely by the strategic director of finance and corporate services. Where appropriate, contractual penalties continue to be imposed.

Extensive work continues as we move towards the implementation of a new hardware and software infrastructure that will considerably improve the underlying IT performance and make it more resilient moving forward.

In line with current plans and to support these implementations, since July:

- A change network has been established including change agents leading on updates for each department
- A new IT training area has been created on the ground floor to test the new Citrix and to train users
- Super user training has commenced together with the drop in sessions for staff
- An upgraded telephony system has been installed.



We are still on target for the main improvements to be rolled out by Christmas with the remaining work to be completed and old systems decommissioned by March 2015. Regular updates will be appearing on the Source as details of the implementation are finalised.

**25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL**

How much has the council spent on mental health provision in each of the last three years?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark Council's net spend on mental health services is as below:

2011/12 – £12.786 million

2012/13 – £11.812 million

2013/14 – £12.780 million

Based on CIPFA Benchmarking in the last year we spent £59.75 per head of population compared to national average of £35.53 per head.

Going forward, the Better Care Fund and then the implementation locally of the Care Act will enable Southwark Council and Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group to further develop health and social care services to people with mental health needs and their families, to achieve even better outcomes and quality of life.

**26. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PARKS AND LEISURE FROM COUNCILLOR REBECCA LURY**

Can the cabinet member give an update on the delivery of the council's commitment to make swimming and gym use free for all Southwark residents?

**RESPONSE**

See question 6.

**27. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PARKS AND LEISURE FROM COUNCILLOR JASMINE ALI**

How will the council respond to the recommendations put forward in the London Health Commission report, Better Health for London?

**RESPONSE**

We welcome the Better Health for London report as we recognise that good health, including local services to support this is important to secure better life chances for residents.

We are especially encouraged by the commitments to tackling obesity, creating a smoke free London and getting London fitter as these commitments will help reinforce what we have prioritised in the council plan. The leader of the council recently announced, at the Leader's Public Question Time, that we are considering

a ban on smoking in children's play areas. Officers are currently looking at options about how such a ban could be delivered.

While supporting the view that there needs to be a joined up approach across London on many of the complex health challenges facing the city, the key recommendations in the report also highlight opportunities for us to amplify what Southwark Council can do to improve the health of our population and to make prevention and early intervention central to what we do.

We will be considering how pan-London action can address other issues of local concern (for example air quality, primary care) and when London wide solutions will be most effective.

Some of the other key ways in which we will respond to the Better Health for London recommendations are noted below:

#### **Better Health for all**

- Alongside smoking cessation activity, we are considering proposals to implement a ban on smoking in children's playgrounds. This is at early stages and more detail will be provided.
- As part of the 1000 Lives survey which was carried out earlier this year, volunteers are gathering the health and wellbeing experiences of people who for example are dealing with illness or taking steps to engage in physical activity. Responses will help to inform our developing health and wellbeing strategy.
- Extending weight management and healthy eating advice to children and families through the exercise and referral programme.
- Encouraging physical activity for staff and running a free lunchtime walking club.

#### **Better health for children**

- Creating healthy environments by investing in our parks and restricting the proliferation of fast food and take away establishments near schools.
- Encouraging healthy eating – we now have all primary children enjoying a free nutritious school meal daily and are working on extending the free fruit to primary aged children.

#### **Better care**

- Training local people to work as peer supporters and commissioning services that help people living with long term conditions such as diabetes.
- Providing better support and improving accessibility to support services for people with mental health.

Overall, this is a positive report that recognises the importance of prioritising the health of Londoners as well as the significance of working collaboratively to improve the health outcomes for residents. We are well equipped to respond to the recommendations.

#### **28. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PARKS AND LEISURE FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON**

What is the council doing to advise and reassure local people who have concerns about Ebola?

## **RESPONSE**

I recognise the need to ensure that our local communities have accessible and up to date information on the Ebola virus, both to help them take preventative actions when travelling to, and returning from, the affected countries in West Africa, as well as offering reassurance on the risk that the Ebola virus poses to the UK.

We take our guidance from Public Health England, who are the lead authority on providing Ebola related advice to the UK.

Public Health England have produced a comprehensive frequently asked questions briefing for the public in order to help answer some of the likely questions that people will have. This is available on the council's website at: [http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/100010/health\\_and\\_social\\_care/3583/ebola -  
\\_general information](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/100010/health_and_social_care/3583/ebola_-_general_information)

Public Health England confirmed that the overall risk to the general UK population continues to be low.

However, there is more to do and colleagues in the public health team have supported community events and engaged with members of the public to provide information on the Ebola virus, which we hope gives some assurance to people worried about loved ones and relatives in the affected countries. Public Health England have also confirmed that they are happy to provide a community reassurance role through attending community events, disseminating information and responding to local queries about the risk of the virus, as well as travel advice in relation to the virus and the UK's preparedness to respond in the event of an outbreak here.

Our communications team are updating the website weekly with information and using our community networks to share information. Local guidance has also been produced by Public Health Lambeth & Southwark for schools and workplaces.

But just to reiterate, Public Health England confirmed that the overall risk to the general UK population continues to be low.

### **29. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE, ARTS AND CULTURE FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER**

Can the cabinet member give an update on the council's plans to become an Age Friendly Borough?

## **RESPONSE**

This administration wants our residents to get the best of Southwark whatever their age. That is why becoming an Age Friendly Borough is one of our ten fairer future promises.

We have reviewed the World Health Organisations criteria to be an age-friendly city and are working with key stakeholders to develop our approach of how we will meet this objective. A report is due to come to cabinet in March 2015 setting out our forward plan for delivery.

However, since May, we have already started taking steps to make the borough better for older people. This includes commissioning targeted employment support

for those over 50 who are trying to get back into work; and ensuring that we are building homes that are suitable for people of all ages so that older people can live independently for longer. We are also learning from best practice in other boroughs who have become Age Friendly.

This administration is by your side when you need extra support. We have introduced and are now implementing the Southwark Ethical Care Charter improving standards for homecare workers and raising the standard of homecare for older and vulnerable residents.

I am proud that we have recently agreed to become a dementia friendly borough including joining the Dementia Action Alliance. We are also establishing the Southwark Dementia Centre at Cator Street which will also include extra care housing as part of our 11,000 council homes delivery programme.

**30. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR BEN JOHNSON**

How many complaints have been made to the council's housing unit in each of the past six financial years (2009/10 to 2014/15 inclusive), broken down by category of complaint and respective ward? Please will the cabinet member provide the results of the most recent satisfaction survey issued by the housing department?

**RESPONSE**

Complaints are a vital part of the feedback that the council receives to improve its services. As a council, we therefore actively encourage people to make complaints to us when they are dissatisfied with our performance.

The table below sets out the complaints by division of the housing department for each of the last six years, shown by ward. It should be noted that the statistics for 2009/10 are significantly understated because the Council had only just started using the i-casework system and usage was uneven. As a result, officers do not use the 2009/10 figures when looking at trends.

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Brunswick Park</b>	Community Engagement				1		
	Customer Experience	18	8	14	16	20	28
	Housing Operations	4	5	26	39	30	35
	Maintenance & Compliance	137	313	198	208	128	198
	Major Works		1	3	5	13	17
	Specialist Housing Services	4	7	11	10	11	17
<b>Brunswick Park Total</b>		<b>163</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>295</b>
<b>Camberwell Green</b>	Community Engagement			1	1		

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	Customer Experience	13	6	12	19	17	23
	Housing Operations	4	5	29	39	40	45
	Maintenance & Compliance	139	267	225	188	137	202
	Major Works	5	2	2	3	8	6
	Specialist Housing Services		7	5	16	13	11
<b>Camberwell Green Total</b>		<b>161</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>Cathedrals</b>	Community Engagement				3	1	
	Customer Experience	11	5	15	27	19	22
	Housing Operations	1	4	32	28	28	43
	Maintenance & Compliance	96	151	167	137	135	138
	Major Works	5	16	15	4	6	3
	Specialist Housing Services	3	9	7	11	10	10
<b>Cathedrals Total</b>		<b>116</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>Chaucer</b>	Community Engagement				1	1	
	Customer Experience	7	5	9	25	16	18
	Housing Operations		2	26	23	21	36
	Maintenance & Compliance	98	162	154	174	115	182
	Major Works	5	8	10	7	5	4
	Specialist Housing Services	11	14	10	13	12	15
<b>Chaucer Total</b>		<b>121</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>College</b>	Customer Experience	3	4	5	17	10	19
	Housing Operations	4	3	16	17	19	24
	Maintenance & Compliance	45	102	101	107	65	87
	Major Works	2	2	2	4	3	1
	Specialist Housing Services	3	5	5	5	9	9
<b>College Total</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>140</b>

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>East Dulwich</b>	Customer Experience	2	4	5	9	11	6
	Housing Operations		1	9	18	15	8
	Maintenance & Compliance	31	55	58	58	61	72
	Major Works	1	3		1	4	2
	Specialist Housing Services	1		1	8	2	2
<b>East Dulwich Total</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>East Walworth</b>	Customer Experience	13	5	5	35	14	23
	Housing Operations		1	18	31	26	19
	Maintenance & Compliance	71	155	98	159	72	92
	Major Works				3	4	1
	Specialist Housing Services	10	4	9	15	11	4
<b>East Walworth Total</b>		<b>94</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>Faraday</b>	Community Engagement						1
	Customer Experience	17	11	8	27	19	19
	Housing Operations	2	4	31	35	151	136
	Maintenance & Compliance	157	289	236	260	87	66
	Major Works	1			7	1	4
	Specialist Housing Services	1	2	8	14	20	14
	<b>Faraday Total</b>		<b>178</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Grange</b>	Community Engagement				3	1	
	Customer Experience	14	3	14	18	17	31
	Housing Operations			85	30	40	30
	Maintenance & Compliance	32	60	90	152	123	117
	Major Works	1		1	5	10	12
	Specialist Housing Services	10	10	6	6	14	7
	<b>Grange Total</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>205</b>

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Livesey</b>	Customer Experience	21	4	11	33	20	32
	Housing Operations	3	5	34	43	34	47
	Maintenance & Compliance	111	238	215	270	187	206
	Major Works	14	17	10	5		5
	Specialist Housing Services	3	7	13	9	4	6
<b>Livesey Total</b>		<b>152</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Newington</b>	Community Engagement					1	
	Customer Experience	13	5	11	33	28	23
	Housing Operations	3	6	64	46	59	51
	Maintenance & Compliance	149	283	252	305	254	214
	Major Works			3	16	25	38
	Specialist Housing Services	4	3	6	21	23	25
<b>Newington Total</b>		<b>169</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>351</b>
<b>Nunhead</b>	Community Engagement				2		2
	Customer Experience	11	8	10	27	14	36
	Housing Operations	1	2	30	30	32	26
	Maintenance & Compliance	112	175	160	162	102	188
	Major Works	4	3	1	2		9
	Specialist Housing Services	5	10	5	12	9	20
<b>Nunhead Total</b>		<b>133</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>281</b>
<b>Peckham</b>	Community Engagement				1		1
	Customer Experience	11	4	11	24	16	27
	Housing Operations	2	4	18	29	33	27
	Maintenance & Compliance	116	241	198	152	100	190
	Major Works	2	7	3	3	5	2

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	Specialist Housing Services	5	6	1	4	6	5
<b>Peckham Total</b>		<b>136</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>Peckham Rye</b>	Community Engagement				1	1	
	Customer Experience	6	9	12	21	11	18
	Housing Operations			12	16	25	13
	Maintenance & Compliance	49	110	103	89	69	101
	Major Works	9	7	6		7	4
	Specialist Housing Services	2	4	3	7	6	12
<b>Peckham Rye Total</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>Riverside</b>	Community Engagement				1		
	Customer Experience	16	7	9	29	14	27
	Housing Operations			84	44	44	42
	Maintenance & Compliance	47	93	121	174	156	159
	Major Works			2	13	11	19
	Specialist Housing Services	8	11	15	19	17	27
<b>Riverside Total</b>		<b>71</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>Rotherhithe</b>	Community Engagement			1			
	Customer Experience	3	15	9	25	19	32
	Housing Operations	4	6	33	24	38	42
	Maintenance & Compliance	105	188	152	174	146	165
	Major Works	7	3	2	2	5	15
	Specialist Housing Services	3	2	6	12	13	15
<b>Rotherhithe Total</b>		<b>122</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>269</b>
<b>South Bermondsey</b>	Customer Experience	15	1	16	25	14	31
	Housing Operations		2	59	26	24	23



Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	Maintenance & Compliance	29	63	115	162	130	135
	Major Works	1			1	7	16
	Specialist Housing Services	4	4	6	8	11	8
<b>South Bermondsey Total</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>South Camberwell</b>	Customer Experience	9	5	8	10	12	19
	Housing Operations	1	1	27	31	27	21
	Maintenance & Compliance	111	196	155	153	103	150
	Major Works	8	7	7	4		6
	Specialist Housing Services	2	4	2	11	10	13
<b>South Camberwell Total</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>Surrey Docks</b>	Customer Experience	12		4	13	8	5
	Housing Operations	1	1	1	5	12	6
	Maintenance & Compliance	30	52	31	32	27	36
	Major Works					1	2
	Specialist Housing Services	1	1		2	2	1
<b>Surrey Docks Total</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>The Lane</b>	Customer Experience	14	5	14	40	26	20
	Housing Operations	1	3	30	32	33	22
	Maintenance & Compliance	107	183	179	167	105	175
	Major Works	5	5	2	5	19	8
	Specialist Housing Services	5	7	10	8	8	17
<b>The Lane Total</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Village</b>	Customer Experience	3	5	2	11	11	12
	Housing Operations	1	3	5	9	4	21
	Maintenance & Compliance	48	76	69	47	32	70
	Major Works	2	4	3	1	1	1

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	Specialist Housing Services		6	3	3	3	3
<b>Village Total</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Out of borough / address incomplete</b>	Community Engagement				2	2	
	Customer Experience	41	15	15	43	44	74
	Housing Operations	1	2	20	13	29	33
	Maintenance & Compliance	28	35	17	39	38	59
	Major Works	2	1	3	1	4	5
	Specialist Housing Services	21	19	23	23	25	30
<b>ALL SOUTHWARK</b>	<b>Community Engagement</b>			2	16	7	4
	<b>Customer Experience</b>	273	134	219	527	380	545
	<b>Housing Operations</b>	33	60	689	608	764	750
	<b>Maintenance &amp; Compliance</b>	1,848	3,487	3,094	3,369	2,372	3,002
	<b>Major Works</b>	74	86	75	92	139	180
	<b>Specialist Housing Services</b>	106	142	155	237	239	271
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2,334</b>	<b>3,909</b>	<b>4,234</b>	<b>4,849</b>	<b>3,901</b>	<b>4,752</b>

Given the difficulties around the 2009/10 figures mentioned previously, these statistics show a reduction in maintenance and compliance complaints since 2010/11 and increases in housing operations complaints, major works and specialist housing services.

However, there has been an increase in repairs complaints since last year due to the performance of Mears and T Brown. I am working with both contractors through the repairs core group meetings to address these performance issues.

The increase in housing operations complaints has arisen as the council has tightened up its processes on rent collection and tenancy checks, whilst the increase in complaints on major works and specialist housing services (which includes leaseholder charges) has occurred alongside the significantly increased volume of major works now carried out as a result of the Warm, Dry and Safe programme.

On the satisfaction survey, the responses from tenants in council-managed homes, and the improvement from the previous year, are set out below.

These satisfaction figures differ from the monthly KPI for customer satisfaction with the repairs service which is measured via a survey, either telephone or email, directly to the resident who has had the repair carried out. The resident satisfaction survey asks residents about their overall experience of the repairs service.

Satisfaction survey performance indicator	2014	Change since 2013
Overall satisfaction with landlord services	65%	+1%
Overall quality of your home	61%	+1%
Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live	75%	+4%
Value for money for rent/service charge	63%	+5%
Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance	65%	+3%
Keeping tenants informed about things that may affect them	72%	+9%

**31. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH McCALLUM**

How many complaints have there been from leaseholders in each of the past three financial years about excessive leaseholder billing? What is the total sum of leaseholder bills in the borough for each of the past five years? What is the average bill per leaseholder in each of these years?

**RESPONSE**

The table below shows the complaint categories used to record leaseholder service charge complaints. The numbers in the table relate to those complaints which specifically referred to excessive or increased leaseholder billing. In each of these years, the number of complaints received amounted to no more than 0.2% of the total number of bills issued.

Services	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total
Collections	0	0	14	13	27
Arrears Recovery - Capital Service Charges	8	10	2	0	20
Arrears Recovery - Revenue Service Charges	5	22	5	0	32
Billing	0	0	1	0	1
Capital Works Estimates	0	0	1	3	4
Construction of Major Works Service Charges	0	2	1	0	3
Construction of Revenue Service Charges	0	0	4	0	4
Revenue Service Charge Construction	0	0	1	1	2
Service Charge Enquiries	0	0	7	0	7
Service Charge Estimates	0	0	1	0	1
Service Charge Reductions	0	0	1	0	1
Garages	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>17</b>	

The table below shows the total leaseholder bills and average bill per leaseholder over the past 5 years in Southwark. Revenue service charge levels rose in 2011/12 as a consequence of the independent Grant Thornton review into charges but are now declining due to on-going efficiencies. The average capital charges have increased in 2013/14 as investment work has progressed on high investment need estates.

Year	Revenue Total	Revenue Average	Capital Total	Capital Average
2013/14	£17,853,035	£1,224	£17,507,938	£4,816
2012/13	£17,422,638	£1,232	£10,593,192	£3,494
2011/12	£17,610,521	£1,245	£10,551,312	£3,047
2010/11	£16,482,025	£1,154	£8,860,487	£4,439
2009/10	£17,630,095	£1,056	£5,613,769	£2,840

**32. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

How many notices seeking possession have been issued by the council in each of the past three years? How many evictions have been carried out by the council over the same period and will the cabinet member commit to a wider review of policy following the recent high court case condemning the council's unlawful eviction?

**RESPONSE**

The table below sets out the numbers of notices seeking possession (NSPs) and evictions. These demonstrate that the council is working with households where NSPs have been issued to resolve matters. Only a small proportion ultimately result in eviction. However, we will not tolerate illegal occupation and we have the full support of our residents in that regard.

The table below outlines the number of NSPs issued by the council and the number of evictions carried out by the council.

Year	NSPs	Evictions
2012/13	8,654	223
2013/14	8,971	227
2014/15 year to date	5,739	120

These evictions were carried out for a number of reasons as set out below:

	Evicted - Domestic Violence	Evicted - Illegal Occup	Evicted - Nuisance	Evicted - Other Reason	Evicted - Rent Arrears	Grand Total
2008/09	0	-	2	54	162	<b>218</b>
2009/10	2	-	4	67	279	<b>352</b>
2010/11	1	-	2	63	260	<b>326</b>
2011/12	1	40	1	24	146	<b>212</b>
2012/13	0	76	5	1	141	<b>223</b>
2013/14	0	71	1	7	148	<b>227</b>
2014/15 - 7 months	0	44	0	1	75	<b>120</b>

In regards to the recent High Court case, this was a highly unusual, but very distressing, case. Senior officers took action immediately as the case came to light to investigate what occurred and to implement disciplinary proceedings. The judgment largely rested on the findings of that investigation and, despite the

criticism of the actions of the council in the judgment, no criticisms were made about the council's investigation.

Poor treatment of tenants and residents is totally unacceptable and we have now reviewed the judgment stringently to see if there is any further action we need to take. We are already reviewing a significant sample of evictions carried out from the beginning of 2013/14 to date to ensure compliance with our own procedures. This review will report at the end of the calendar year.

**33. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN EDWARDS**

Peckham Rye's Labour councillors want to ensure that cycling in our ward is made as safe and easy as possible. We also want to ensure that improvements to the cycling infrastructure around Peckham Rye Common are sensitive to the needs of park users and protects this much valued community resource from unnecessary development. Could the cabinet member give a reassurance that the suggestion made by Southwark Cyclists to "Create protected space for cycling on both sides of Peckham Rye Common and at the eastern junction of Peckham Rye/A2214" will be taken forward for investigation and development with Transport for London (TfL) at the earliest opportunity, and that this will be done in a way which respects the integrity of Peckham Rye Common?

**RESPONSE**

Yes. As part of the Quietway programme TfL have indicated that they will prioritise the delivery of a new cycle route through the Peckham Rye area linking to Honor Oak Park. We believe that the proposed alignment is likely to be along the eastern side of the common following the existing London Cycle Network route which provides an onward link to Lewisham. As part of this work we will also look at what interventions are necessary to make this particular junction safe.

The council is currently consulting on a draft cycling strategy and responses to this will help to identify demand for this and other proposed routes. The adopted strategy will include a map of routes and key locations that are to be the focus of future investment and the new Southwark plan will refer to the strategy so that relevant development will be required to enable the delivery of routes and interventions identified.

Once confirmation of the proposed alignment of routes in the area and funding for delivery becomes available a full feasibility study and public consultation exercise will be undertaken to determine the most appropriate measures to make the route attractive and safe for people who cycle. We will ensure that the needs of all users of the common are fully considered as part of this process.