

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.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE DALE

Will the leader consider doing more public events like the recent Leader's Question Time in the future and how will you work to ensure that even more Southwark residents get involved?

RESPONSE

Thank you very much Councillor Dale for your supplemental question. In the first instance I hope that more opposition councillors come along to future question times. I think it was disappointing that so few came along; they wanted it but they did not turn up. They voted for it, 100% of the Conservatives turned up - I should point that out - and it was a significant percentage of Liberal Democrats, only the problem is there are so few of them these days that it is not hard to achieve. But look, I think it was a good experience. I think it was a learning experience. I think there are opportunities perhaps to have themed question times where a group of cabinet members get the opportunity to be questioned on issues and I think as we

look around council assembly this evening the fact that we had 225 people in City Hall, most of those being the public, is testament that this was an experiment well worth looking at in terms of public involvement and I hope that it will grow as an idea. I do think that it is important that we try and involve the public more in our proceedings so there is greater interaction - people are holding us to account not just at community councils but at council assemblies properly.

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.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you to the leader for his answer, except that it is not really an answer because I did ask for some figures and I haven't got any figures. I am actually very concerned because the reason that I have raised this question with you is that it has come to my attention through a wheelchair user in my ward who is trying to access the shared ownership properties on one of the developments - I am not going to name developments and I am not going to name RSLs because I don't think that is fair at this time but I am happy to provide - he has been registered since May this year to access for a shared ownership of a wheelchair property but has recently been told by one of the developers that they got through their marketing period and there was no interest so those wheelchair units are going to be presented as general needs housing.

The biggest concern that has come to light is that the RSLs don't seem to understand the process that the residents need to go through in order to access the shared ownership; so they don't know how to market them but the most worrying thing is that the planning department or whichever department would pick

up the subsequent issues doesn't seem to be aware of what is happening to these properties and the fact that we are approving them at planning and thinking that we are getting them and then we are not - and people who should be able to access them aren't able to access them.

Would the leader commit to making some kind of enquiry across the department so that we can all understand exactly how a wheelchair-using resident is able to access the shared ownership properties in this borough with ease?

RESPONSE

I want to thank Councillor Morris for her supplemental question and the issue that she raises is an important one and yes I will enquire as to how that happens but I think it would also be useful if she were able to supply me with details of the particular case because I think it is quite often from the particular that one learns lessons which can be more generally applied, so I think there is a very important issue that she is raising here. I would like to take it further so if she could get me that information I will look into it.

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.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MITCHELL

Thank you Mr Mayor and may I thank the leader for his answer. Could I just ask what other ideas may have been considered and why this came to the top as the preferred option and also can he assure us that there will be a consultation with appropriate local and national charities to ensure that developments - if this is the one that goes ahead - accords with the best possible practice?

RESPONSE

I want to thank Councillor Mitchell for his supplemental question The truth of the matter is I don't know what other uses were considered for this site but what I do know is what we have described as a home for people with disabilities is an

absolute priority of this council - a greater independent living is an absolute priority that we need to pursue as an authority both because it gives people greater independence and obviously it makes them less reliant on other residential forms of care - but yes I will give him that undertaking that we will work with others interested in this project to take it forward and I will come back to him with an answer on that more general question as to what else was considered for Holmhurst other than this if that is okay.

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.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR KATH WHITTAM

Thank you Mr Mayor, and thank you to the leader for his answer to my question. My supplementary is what impact would the current plans for the Thames Tunnel have on people who live, work and go to school around the proposed Chambers Wharf site?

RESPONSE

I want to thank Councillor Whittam for her supplemental question. We know that the impact of the Thames Tunnel as a drive site from Chambers Wharf is going to be hugely significant. We have commenced judicial review proceedings. We have - both myself, Councillor Al-Samerai and Councillor Mitchell - written to the Secretary of State involved in this issue to say would you talk to us about this and we have had a response saying no he won't and there is absolutely no point meeting to discuss this further; and so we will press ahead with our judicial review application.

We know that there will be impacts on the amenity of those living, working and being educated nearby. The level of the impact on those people has been understated by Thames Water up to now; that has been recognised by the Planning Inspectorate but completely ignored by the Secretary of State - the government in this instance - and that is unacceptable and also, we are absolutely of the view that Thames Water is still not treating people, even though they are beginning negotiations with residents living nearby, they are not treating those

people with the respect they deserve and they are making people jump through hoops which are utterly unnecessary.

I think there is one thing - we do need to play this with two hands. We have to pursue our judicial review and we have to negotiate as hard as we can on behalf of local residents and one of the features is we are going to have to negotiate hard in terms of getting jobs and training opportunities for local residents, so that maybe something useful will come out of this for local residents in terms of opportunities for working on this major infrastructure project but I would rather it was not happening in Chambers Wharf.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI

Thank you Mr Mayor. Just on the Chambers Wharf point - sorry it's not really my supplemental - but Rita Cruise O' Brien who has been chair of the 'Save Your Riverside' Campaign has recently stood down and handed over to Barney and I just wondered if this council could formally note thanks to Rita for all the work that she has done in charing that campaign – she has been absolutely formidable and I know respected by myself and Councillor John in terms of the effort that she has put in, so I would just like to put that on the record if that is okay with you Mr Mayor.

My question to the leader was about apprenticeships and as well as Simon Hughes doing brilliant work in many areas, he and Vince Cable who is my other hero after Simon - obviously Simon comes first, but Vince comes a close second - have created over 6 000 apprenticeships in Southwark over the last four years.

My slight worry about the leader's answer is he is not really counting how many apprenticeships the council is creating additionally to what would be created any way so he hasn't really answered, unsurprisingly, my question about how he plans to measure the number of apprenticeships that he is creating and the second part of my supplemental is particularly around a meeting which took place recently between Laing O'Rourke and Mace where they have said that they have a scheme starting in January which has over 30 apprenticeships and they can't find Southwark young people to fill them. So I wondered if the leader could specifically answer how he is going to measure his apprenticeships and how we can deal with this particularly urgent issue of filling those apprenticeships gaps in January.

RESPONSE

I am grateful to Councillor Al-Samerai for her supplemental and just on the point of Rita Cruise-O'Brien absolutely; Rita has been an absolute star in this campaign and she is not completely leaving the campaign but she is stepping down from her leading role and she will be missed.

We successfully measure as a council all those jobs and training opportunities that we create. We demonstrate that through our performance plan that we publish each year and - in fact twice a year - as a council and so we are absolutely transparent when we say 'we are creating jobs and opportunities and apprenticeships for our residents' when we say 'we are responsible for creating those' and we are not going to try and claim the credit for apprenticeships or jobs that others create but where we have been instrumental in creating those jobs and opportunities we will say so. So please go to the performance plan in due course when we set out how when those miles stones will be reached.

To pick up the really important point that she makes about the lack of job readiness and skills that people have: this is a major issue across, not just Southwark, but across London. There are 19 000 construction job vacancies in London at the present time. We anticipate across London and the south east that there will be another 100 000 construction jobs becoming available in the next two years. Who is going to do those jobs? There has been a systemic failure by the construction industry over the last 15 to 20 years to train people. They have relied on effectively cheap imported labour and largely the eastern European labour to fill the vacancies but that is going to be untenable given the scale of building construction and infrastructure work which is going to go on.

So there is an absolute urgency to us in Southwark and right across London to really meeting that skills gap. One thing which we really importantly need to do is to get hold of a greater level of skills funding and so devolution of skills funding needs to come from government and your hero Vince Cable needs to give up some of his hands holding on to the pots of money that he has so that we can get skills training money. I hear what she says but I understand he is pretty opposed to BIS giving up skills training funding and also we need to get a greater hold on the work programme - that is one thing that we can do. We are already doing something because we are establishing a construction skills college which will be based on the Heygate in the first instance to really give our residents some of the training that they need and we are going to be working with the major employers on that in the coming months, together with partners in Lambeth and Lewisham, to make that a really worth while project.

So we are doing things as a council - we could do so much more if we had more of that skills funding - but there is a massive issue that we need to address in London and what we need to get to, this is what I am really anxious to get to: one of the reasons people think there is nothing in the regeneration of the Elephant and Castle for me is we are not seeing that critical mass of jobs and apprenticeships and opportunities for local residents onto those sites and we need to reverse that and we are going to do some more work over the next twelve months.

The employers are saying these people don't have the skills and we are not getting them forward. You can talk over me or you can listen to me, because I have done a lot of thinking about this, together with colleagues across London, this is not something you are asking me for the first time, this is what I am thinking about day in and day out: how do we get Southwark residents into the jobs and opportunities that are there? We are going to need to do some intensive work to get some of our residents into these apprenticeships - almost walking them into the interview but that is a really intensive piece of work it needs to be done and we will do it. We were the ones who gave the bold commitment of 2,000 apprenticeship and 5,000 jobs. I recall it was the Liberal Democrat's manifesto which only committed to 1,000 apprenticeships so you know we are serious about this and we have been serious about it over the last four years and we will be serious about it now. I know there is a pressing problem and we will try and meet it but there is no point shouting at me. What we should all be doing is going and getting our residents and taking them to these apprenticeship opportunities, putting them in touch with employers and not just moaning about somebody else's responsibility.

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.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JANE LYONS

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you leader for responding to my question about the progress of free swimming and gym places across the borough. I note it was a fairly popular question from across the parties actually to understand the progress so I note that more details will be available in the New Year. Could I just ask that within that pilot, or tender, or however it is going to work, that we also look at changing health behaviour because I am not convinced that cost is always the barrier to changing how I approach my healthy or not so healthy lifestyle.

My question is then: could we incorporate that in the pilot? The secondary part of that is: it references other potential funding forces and I was going to ask for more clarity on that – does that mean it is outside the borough finances? Thank you.

RESPONSE

I would like to thank Councillor Lyons for her supplementary question. This is obviously an important issue and an important commitment that we made and really central to our public health commitment in the borough. We are looking at sources of funding to delivery on this, there is a timing issue, we have a contract

with Fusion who manage our leisure centres up to 2016 and it is likely therefore that the principal role out of this offer will come when that contract is renewed effectively or some alternative means of providing our leisure management is introduced and that will be in 2016. What is good about this is that this is an idea and a proposal which has the support and backing of our colleagues on the health and wellbeing board - therefore our GPs and CCG and also our acute trusts in the borough - and it is seen as a very important element of tackling physical inactivity in the borough and therefore we would I have no doubt continue GP referrals for leisure as a universal free service and we will hopefully make that more widely known so GPs do that and we will be looking at Sport England who are very interested in this proposal as a potential source of funding as well and others have come forward to us - other sport and health groups – and want to be a part of what we are doing in Southwark.

I think this has really caught the imagination, not only of the health world but also the sport world in London and beyond and therefore I think we will be real trail blazers but I will keep her posted and will keep council assembly posted.

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 peninsula 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. B

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 totalling 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.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR KIERON WILLIAMS (CAMBERWELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

I would like to thank the leader for his answer to my question on policing. I just ask as a supplemental question, I am worried that the small numbers of police we have do now mean we are not well able to do the preventative police work that is needed and I just wondered how he feels that the local policing model is working in our borough?

RESPONSE

I want to thank Councillor Williams for his supplemental question. I think there is some level of concern about how it is working at the moment. I mean over the last week or so we have seen a spate of violent crime in our borough and we have not seen a spate like that for some time. Whether there is a correlation between that and the lack of visible policing on our streets, it is for others to judge but we certainly will be making the case and have made the case to the borough commander and further up the line that it really does concern us. I think that people really liked the safer neighbourhood teams, they really liked the physical presence of police - knowing that there was a sergeant and PCs and PSCOs on their streets. I think it was a shame that that model has been abandoned by this commissioner and this Mayor.

We were promised that there would still be visible policing on our streets in the way that we had got used to but I don't think that has been delivered on. There has been a failure to deliver on what I think was committed to when safer neighbourhood teams were withdrawn in the structure that we had come to know them in. So I think there are issues that we need to raise and I think there are concerns to be raised. We should not get carried away – crime is still largely going down in Southwark but I don't think the fear of crime is going down as it once was and I think in fact the fear of crime is probably increasing in terms of people's public perception. This is something we all need to be vigilant for and I think we all need to carry on making the case as Councillor Situ is making for more police in our borough and if you have not signed the petition, then please sign the petition that he has organised.

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."

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BILL WILLIAMS (BERMONDSEY AND ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you leader for answering my original question, I do have a supplemental.

Have government ministers Eric Pickles MP and Liz Truss MP given any direct response to the request from all three party leaders at Southwark Council to engage over the decision to use Chambers Wharf as a drive site for the Thames Tunnel Tideway?

RESPONSE

I would like to thank Councillor Williams for his supplemental question. I alluded to this earlier on, I should have made clear the answer was no - it was simply the treasury solicitor who wrote to us. I am not sure that our letter even got as far as the Secretary of State which I think is really disappointing, because I think if Eric Pickles and his colleagues understood the impact which the drive site of Chambers Wharf is going to have on local schools and local residents, they would think again - they would be bound to think again and to think about whether it was or was not more suitable (as the planning inspectorate clearly did) that the drive site should be at Abbey Mills and Chambers Wharf should be a receiving site only. I think it is a great shame that they have not done that. This has been an absolute cross-party campaign and I do urge members on the other side to continue to campaign with us against this proposal which will blight a neighbourhood in a significant part of our borough for seven years.

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.

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

Thank you Mr Mayor and I want to thank the leader for his really comprehensive answer to the community council's question.

I want to paraphrase, really for members of the public, in effect, what the leader said that the coalition government and the NHS budget cuts were now creating a more expensive and a longer term problem for people with health and care needs whilst at the same time starving local councils of cash.

So my further question to you leader is as follows: can the leader confirm if the Liberal Democrat and Conservative councillors here, have expressed disagreement to him about current government policies and in support of people in Southwark - have they expressed disagreement?

RESPONSE

I want to thank Councillor Seaton for his supplemental question. I don't think they have in that way really. I remember in 2011 when we were talking about our first budget the mantra was being thrown at us by the other side that the Liberal Democrats in government were having to clear up the mess left behind by Labour - they were more conservative than the Conservatives in terms of getting their lines right and perhaps they are reflecting on that and ruing their commitment to the collation government in the way that they were in 2010/2011. We are seeing our NHS under real pressure, we all know that and we as a local authority are under real pressure. I do make the point of course, we have taken 28% out of our budget in the last four years, we are due to take another £36m out of our budget in next year's budget and I make the point that we have continued to provide services of high quality, we have continued to keep the streets clean, our park running, our libraries open and services being provided to our residents, especially the most vulnerable. The observation is made that if every other department in government had been as efficient as local government we would not have a deficit anymore. So that is something to think about and I think that also makes the case which is completely compelling as to why a greater proportion of health spend, if not all health spend, should come to a regional and local level for greater control by us so that we can have proper integration and properly influence how effectively budgets are spent in a place and that place I am talking about is Southwark.

So we have been impacted. It is a shame that the Liberal Democrats went along with the Conservative mantra - shame on them, shame on Simon Hughes of course and we look forward to him losing his seat as payment for signing up to a Conservative coalition.

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.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR ELEANOR KERSLAKE

Thank you Mr Mayor, and thank you Councillor Colley for your response.

I am a mere minnow compared to Councillor Wingfield in experience but I am delighted to be here at my second council assembly and I hope that all the new councillors for 2014 are settling well into their role. It has been many things that I have expected and many, many more things that I did not expect from being a councillor. For all the wonderful things about representing Newington ward by far the most difficult has been meeting residents who are at their lowest point and are refused help. Whether it is a resident on the Pasley estate with cancer who has to wait six months for their personal independence payments, whether it is a single mother on the Brandon Estate who is having to find money to pay the bedroom tax out of her zero hours contract on unreliable income as a care worker in Southwark. This is not the fault of these residents.

Relevant to this question, only this week myself and Councillor Coyle met a lady who through no fault of her own and through the government's welfare reforms, was on her last meal and we had to refer her to a food bank and to the Southwark emergency support scheme.

The question is: thank you Councillor Colley for confirming that despite the government threatening to remove this funding, a Labour administration will guarantee £2.7m to protect the emergency funds and I would like to ask Councillor Colley what she thinks the longer term effects will be of this cut and if she agrees that this is one cut too far from this government?

RESPONSE

Thank you Councillor Kerlake and I think you are absolutely right to take this back through to the human element. I think too often we talk in terms of statistics and money about schemes like the emergency support scheme and welfare cuts, when actually it is about individuals and the individual desperate circumstances that too

many of our residents find themselves in and the Southwark emergency support scheme is there to provide that safety net for people who are in their most desperate times. Another good example might be a person fleeing from domestic violence who may find themselves with absolutely nothing. The emergency scheme is often there to help them with a rent deposit, to help them with a washing machine, a bed, a sofa; the basic elements that people need to be able to live their lives.

What is particularly worrying to me as we look at the future of the emergency support scheme, is the increasing numbers of people who are being referred to us by job centre plus and particularly the reports coming through from officers that all too often, those people are people who are suffering from benefits sanctions.

Not only are they referring them to the food banks so that they can afford to eat but are referring them to our emergency support scheme and so we are being hit really with a double whammy where one arm of government is sanctioning residents' benefits and making some financial benefits from that - telling people to come to the council for help while DWP HQ is cutting off the funding to councils to provide that crisis support.

I think some people may have seen reports, misleading reports, that the DWP is doing a u-turn and considering reinstating that funding and I am afraid nothing could be further from the truth. Whilst having announced that they would cut that funding without any consultation earlier this year, they have simply been forced into holding a consultation because of a judicial review that was being brought by Islington Council and the Child Poverty Action Group. Having read the consultation document, it is really little more than a sham that they put forward three options and not a single one of them involves more money for local authorities.

I suppose we should not really be surprised at that behaviour because this is really a cruel and incompetent government. Just this week the chair of the public accounts committee found that half a billion pounds has been invested in ICT for universal credit and that will just have to be written off because those systems are simply not fit for purpose and the national audit office report has found that that universal credit programme will save the tax payer almost two billion pounds less than was originally estimated and faces further unexpected delays. They can find the money for these incompetent schemes and yet not the money to provide very basic crisis support for residents.

Mr Mayor I can only conclude that the only hope for our most vulnerable residents is that in May this year we will vote out the Conservative and Liberal Democrat government and that we will elect an MP in Bermondsey and old Southwark who will really stand up for the most vulnerable residents in our borough and that MP will be Neil Coyle.

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.

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

I want to thank Councillor Colley for her encouraging updates on the revenue and benefits service since it was bought in-house in April 2011. I have quick supplemental question: what lessons has the council learnt from in-sourcing the service?

RESPONSE

Thank you Councillor Pollak. I am delighted to say I also had an opportunity to meet the staff today from the revenue and benefits service and to thank them personally for the commitment and hard work which has resulted in us winning this gold award for the most improved revenue and benefits service in the country.

Mr Mayor, it is important to remember that in 2010 it felt like a real risk to bring the service back in-house. We had no staff, we had no IT systems and we could not be sure that we would be able to deliver an improved service but what this performance has shown is that actually in-house services can be flexible to meet the need of our residents, can provide value for money and out-perform private providers.

Without their success I am not sure we would have been so confident to bring other services like customer services - the call centre - back in-house and that has been a real success story. In terms of what we have learnt from these successes is that I think when contracts come up for renewal or re-tendering we should really be asking ourselves 'would this service be better delivered in house?' Now that answer won't always be yes but there will be times when services will be better delivered by the voluntary sector for instance or there might be real economies of scale and savings to be found by using a private sector provider. What we have learnt is that in-house delivery should always be given really serious consideration and that we should not drift automatically to an out-source solution.

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.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JON HARTLEY

Thank you Mr Mayor, and thank you to Councillor Colley for that answer. It is really amazing to think that in a four year period where the council has lost over a quarter of its budget, rather than just keeping the wheels on, the Labour administration has been able to see these manifesto commitments and a whole range of other improvements to keep improving council services for local people. In that positive vein, could Councillor Colley tell me further about the plans to modernise services and to increase value for money?

RESPONSE

I would like to thank Councillor Hartley for his supplemental question. As I said in my main answer it looks like very likely impossible that by 2018 we could be operating on half the money that we had in 2010 and there can be no doubt that we need to see radical change to the way we operate and the way we deliver services. So we have in place a modernisation programme and transformation programmes around IT - which I am sure we would all agree very much is in need of improvement - our customer access work place and work force strategies but we really need to be hard nosed and not just think about transformation but actually how those can generate savings and efficiencies and cost reductions in the short to medium term. With that in mind we have established four strategic saving work streams which are piloting projects and looking to the future and those streams are working.

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

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
Brunswick Park	Community Engagement				1		
	Customer Experience	18	8	14	16	20	28

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	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
Brunswick Park Total		163	334	252	279	202	295
Camberwell Green	Community Engagement			1	1		
	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
Camberwell Green Total		161	287	274	266	215	287
Cathedrals	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
Cathedrals Total		116	185	236	210	199	216
Chaucer	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
Chaucer Total		121	191	209	243	170	255

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
College	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
College Total		57	116	129	150	106	140
East Dulwich	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
East Dulwich Total		35	63	73	94	93	90
East Walworth	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
East Walworth Total		94	165	130	243	127	139
Faraday	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	
Faraday Total		178	306	283	343	278	240
Grange	Community Engagement				3	1	

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	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
Grange Total		57	73	196	214	205	197
Livesey	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
Livesey Total		152	271	283	360	245	296
Newington	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
Newington Total		169	297	336	421	390	351
Nunhead	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
Nunhead Total		133	198	206	235	157	281

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Peckham	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
	Specialist Housing Services	5	6	1	4	6	5
Peckham Total		136	262	231	213	160	252
Peckham Rye	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
Peckham Rye Total		66	130	136	134	119	148
Riverside	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
Riverside Total		71	111	231	280	242	274
Rotherhithe	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

Ward	Housing Division	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	Major Works	7	3	2	2	5	15
	Specialist Housing Services	3	2	6	12	13	15
Rotherhithe Total		122	214	203	237	221	269
South Bermondsey	Customer Experience	15	1	16	25	14	31
	Housing Operations		2	59	26	24	23
	Maintenance & Compliance	29	63	115	162	130	135
	Major Works	1			1	7	16
	Specialist Housing Services	4	4	6	8	11	8
South Bermondsey Total		49	70	196	222	186	213
South Camberwell	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
South Camberwell Total		131	213	199	209	152	209
Surrey Docks	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
Surrey Docks Total		44	54	36	52	50	50
The Lane	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
The Lane Total		132	203	235	252	191	242

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

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 effect 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
Total	13	34	39	17	

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	218
2009/10	2	-	4	67	279	352
2010/11	1	-	2	63	260	326
2011/12	1	40	1	24	146	212
2012/13	0	76	5	1	141	223
2013/14	0	71	1	7	148	227
2014/15 -	0	44	0	1	75	120

	Evicted - Domestic Violence	Evicted - Illegal Occup	Evicted - Nuisance	Evicted - Other Reason	Evicted - Rent Arrears	Grand Total
7 months						

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.