

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**

**(ORDINARY)**

**WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2015**

**MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BEN JOHNSON**

Can the leader update councillors on progress with building new council homes through the Leathermarket Community Benefit Society?

**RESPONSE**

The council resolved last year to enter into an agreement for lease and in turn grant a lease to the Leathermarket CBS to enable them to build 27 homes on the Kipling Estate, to be let at council rents.

The Leathermarket CBS submitted a planning application for the development of the scheme on 1 July 2015; this application will be determined shortly.

I will consider a report in December that will authorise the payment of £9.7 million to the Leathermarket CBS in the form of a grant agreement. This will 'gap fund' the project and enable the homes to be built. This report has been subject to some delay to enable the council to resolve and address certain governance issues. A further report that authorises £290,000 of interim funding to the CBS has similarly been delayed for the same reasons but I hope that we will be able to release this funding shortly.

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

Given the leader of the council is aware of the magnificent work Link Age Southwark (formerly Dulwich Helpline and Southwark Churches Care) does to support more than 500 older people in Southwark every year and that its work is highly valued by Southwark's CCG, please can he therefore set out what support his administration will give to assist the rehousing of the charity Link Age Southwark when its current office space at Dulwich Hospital is no longer available?

**RESPONSE**

The council values the work of Link Age Southwark and Officers in Adult Social care will be happy to meet with them, to discuss their future plans, should they wish.

Link Age Southwark is one of many local charities that benefit and enrich our borough. If they are concerned about their future accommodation needs then through our helpful infrastructure arrangements with Community Action Southwark (CAS), the sector locally which is in receipt of £24 million from the council (through grants and contracts this year) may be able to assist them. We are encouraging local charities to work together, including shared premises, to minimise costs, releasing more funding to support their good work

We recognise that finding new premises will be challenging and our Property and Regeneration teams will endeavour to assist Link Age Southwark by exploring

opportunities for vacant commercial and business premises to let within the council's estate.

I have asked officers to make contact with the organisation to discuss their accommodation requirements.

### **3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR TOM FLYNN**

Can the leader confirm what steps the council is taking to ensure residents in Southwark do not lose their vote under the new individual electoral registration system, pushed through by the last Liberal Democrat/Conservative government?

#### **RESPONSE**

It is anticipated that one million people will disappear from the electoral register nationally on 1 December this year due to the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER), pushed through by the last Liberal Democrat/Conservative government. The government has ignored independent advice to wait until the end of 2016 to fully implement IER, so that any difficulties could be ironed out. The transition to IER is currently set to be the biggest disenfranchisement in our history, which will particularly impact people from the BAME communities, the unemployed and lower-paid manual workers, private renters and the younger generation. In Southwark the council is taking all necessary steps to ensure equal opportunity for all our residents in participate in the democratic process.

The council conducts an annual canvass of all residential properties in Southwark. Individual Electoral Registration has introduced an additional level of complexity to the existing registration process, as registrations must now be made for all residents individually through the IER provisions. Households in Southwark receive a household enquiry form during the annual canvass in the summer, asking for information on the residents in the property and if there are new residents, an invitation to register (ITR) will be sent out to each new person. It is only on the completion and return of the ITR that a new resident becomes registered.

It is clear from the above that this is a complicated change to the electoral registration process. Many residents have received a number of different letters, as a result of attempts to ensure that every eligible resident is on the register. This sometimes results in multiple mailings and complicated messaging. It is important to note that the process of communication has largely been regulated, with prescribed forms to be used and recommended texts to be used when communicating with the public.

The transition process during 2014 put in place a process whereby most electors already on the register were confirmed as being correctly on the register, through a data matching process with DWP records. In Southwark the DWP match rate was 62%, which was increased to 79% when a further matching process was conducted with local data sets. All steps involved in the transition to IER have been followed in Southwark, including identifying those at risk of no longer being included on the register of electors. A specialised canvass process has been devised to encourage and enable the student population to register, as well as those living in residential care homes.

The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and the electoral services team take the responsibility of compiling and maintaining a complete and accurate register very seriously, and continued efforts have been made to contact and communicate with all

residents in the borough who are not on the register, and who may be eligible to be registered.

The council has worked with the ERO to make IER as easy as possible for residents. An innovative example of this is the incorporation of the electoral registration process within the My Southwark Account registration, which means that residents are able to register to vote at the same time as they register for Southwark services. This is a local example of the way in which electoral registration could be mainstreamed within other council transactions.

One group of electors who may be at risk of no longer being registered is the 'unconfirmed group' of electors. This group which will be removed from the register as a result of the completion of the transition process at the end of November 2015, as laid out in the Transition Order.

The register is a dynamic document with considerable change, as the IER process beds in. The number of unconfirmed electors has reduced during the transitional period – for example on 12 January 2015 there were 26,532 unconfirmed electors on the register, approximately 13% of the register, compared with 8,140 electors currently in this group of electors, which comprises approximately 4% of the register. The difference reflects the amount of work done on identifying electors who have either moved out of Southwark and therefore should not be on the register, or who could not be confirmed through the IER procedures but who have subsequently registered under IER. All unconfirmed electors have been written to with an ITR, and had their properties visited by a personal canvasser. Where we have held email addresses, these unconfirmed electors have been sent emails.

The ERO is working with the cabinet office during 2016 and onwards, to devise practical ways of making sure that the register is complete and accurate, and that all eligible residents are fully registered through the IER process. Southwark has put forward a pilot proposal which will focus on identifying the churn in population, and ensuring that all new residents are given the opportunity to be registered, and that all eligible residents are indeed registered. This proposal highlights the need to identify those properties where change in residence has occurred, and then identifies appropriate steps to be taken to enable those residents to apply to be registered.

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

Will Southwark be joining the Mental Health Challenge campaign?

#### **RESPONSE**

Southwark Council strongly supports this campaign. The council has agreed to appoint a mental health champion, whose role will include championing the work already going on in the borough as well as working with the Public Health Department and others on how to raise the profile of mental health across the system.

There are other ways to keep mental health and wellbeing on the agenda too, such as championing mental health on equal footing with physical health in the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), and encouraging all councillors to take HWB issues to heart in their policy areas.

The Southwark Health and Wellbeing Strategy covers much of the commitment outlined in the challenge in it aims to promote mental wellbeing and resilience across its strategic priorities including raising awareness and tackling stigma across society

and services. Likewise the CCG is committed to parity of esteem between physical and mental health.

The council works closely with the CCG on commissioning mental health services and promoting good mental health care in primary care and both are committed to tackling inequalities in health and services. Public Health have contributed to a lot of this work in recent years in terms of needs assessment and the evidence base.

#### **5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MITCHELL**

In drawing up the New Southwark Plan, did the leader consider the work of “Create Streets” who are producing practical solutions to the need for increased density of housing without recourse to high rise buildings? If he rejects this way forward, can he say why?

#### **RESPONSE**

In their paper of October 2013, Create Streets identifies a number of issues with modern high density living and identify what they called ‘barriers’ to creating streets. Their vision of ‘streets’ appears to favour subdividing land to maximise the creation of streets and creating narrow-fronted houses fronting onto the streets – what they call ‘street-based homes’.

They are concerned that councils are insisting on developments made up of large impermeable blocks because they insist on lifetime homes and wheel-chair accessible homes in developments; reduced car parking on streets; the use of lifts for housing and wheel-chair accessible housing; and bike storage, which are all labelled as ‘barriers’.

There is little we can do about high land values. However, we do not see the above as ‘barriers’ but additional things that schemes have to deliver to achieve high quality developments that serve mixed and balanced communities and improve our streets.

Creating new streets are an important aspect of our plan and a regeneration model that we have used successfully at Canada Water, the Heygate, and the Aylesbury where we insisted on new routes and frontages to improve access and permeability.

These so called ‘barriers’ to creating streets are all things which the New Southwark Plan overcomes, by requiring new developments to focus on streets and routes, prioritising the delivery of: active street frontages with front doors on streets; generous, accessible and safe public realm; a good mix of housing especially family housing; high quality wheel-chair accessible housing; and, where tall buildings are appropriate, requiring exceptional quality of design not only in external appearance but also in the standards of accommodation including private and communal amenity.

#### **6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN DENNIS**

What impact does the leader believe the government’s proposals for housing associations and the sale of high value council properties will have on council housing in Southwark?

## **RESPONSE**

The government's proposals to fund right to buy for housing association tenants through the sale of high value council homes could have a devastating effect on council housing in Southwark.

The Housing and Planning Bill, which was introduced to Parliament on 13 October 2015, provides extremely limited information on the extension of the right to buy to housing association tenants and on the sale of high value council sales. In respect of housing association right to buy grants these matters are instead devolved to the Homes and Communities Agency (and the Greater London Authority in London). No details have yet been published on how these will operate in practice.

With regard to vacant high value council homes, the bill states that the Secretary of State 'may make a determination' as to the annual level of payment required from local authorities. The bill also enables the Secretary of State to make regulations setting out the definition of high value council housing. The bill does not provide any detail as to what these definitions might be.

As such it is currently very difficult to undertake any detailed modelling on the impacts of the government's proposals in Southwark. However there are very real concerns that given our high land values, limited site availability, and lack of commitment on the government's part to ring fencing of receipts raised within the area within which they are generated, that many replacement homes will instead be built in cheaper (and lower demand) areas of the country. Given the bill's silence on tenure, there is a further concern that many of the replacement homes will not be social homes at council or equivalent rents but could be 'affordable rents', 'shared ownership' or even 'starter (home ownership) homes' which are not affordable to those on low incomes.

The mechanism for funding housing association right to buy will be based on requiring local authorities to make an up front payment based on an estimated level of sales of high value council homes over the forthcoming year. Current indications are that these estimates will be based on historic levels of housing turnover and sale prices. We are currently experiencing a slow down in housing supply, and therefore would urge the government to ensure a degree of flexibility regarding any payment mechanism to take account of unforeseen circumstances.

Any loss of social rented lettings are likely to result in increased levels of households in temporary accommodation, with both social and financial impacts, and an increase in the housing benefit bill.

These policies will also ultimately impact on our housing investment programme, both in delivering the new housing supply and in improving the condition of the existing housing stock. We have a long tradition of effectively using our assets to improve the housing conditions of the borough, and requiring us to hand over our receipts to the Treasury will hamper our ability to do so.

### **7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

Can the leader update us on the situation with the 44 new social rent homes to be provided by Notting Hill Housing Trust that should have been included in The Exchange development at Bermondsey Spa?

## **RESPONSE**

The council has investigated the alleged breach of the Section 106 Agreement on The Exchange development and has taken legal advice. As a result the council will not be taking any further action on this matter.

However, the Notting Hill Housing Trust has undertaken to deliver more affordable housing of the types that meet the urgent needs of the borough on other sites. For example, they have improved the offer of affordable housing on the Manor Place Depot site so that 34 units that were previously intended to be affordable rent set at 56.7% of market rent for 1 bed units and 61.6% of market rent for 2 bed units (inclusive of service charges), capped at Local Authority Housing Allowance Levels, will now be social rented accommodation where the rent levels are determined through the national rent regime.

We are working with Notting Hill Housing Trust to identify ten additional social rent homes elsewhere in the borough.

### **8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR OCTAVIA LAMB**

The opening of the new Camberwell library is a great achievement for the council and the local area, particularly at a time when many other local authorities are having to consider reducing their library services. Can the leader confirm that the cabinet will continue to invest in Southwark's library services despite the significant budget cuts facing the council?

## **RESPONSE**

The council is continuing its investment in the library service and is very proud to honour its commitment in keeping all its libraries open.

The new Camberwell library is proving to be very popular and in its first week of opening saw 6,343 visits and 5,093 items of stock issued, more than double the level of use for this time last year at the old library.

An exciting programme of events is underway and the library welcomed well known authors including Lionel Shriver and Dorothy Koomson. Libraries are at the heart of community life in Southwark and an essential part of our Fairer Future for All commitment to make our borough a great place to live. The new Camberwell Library is the latest achievement in the ongoing libraries modernisation programme. This follows the stunning success of Canada Water Library which opened in 2011 to national acclaim. We are also developing plans to relocate East Street Library with a new facility as part of the Aylesbury regeneration scheme as well as proposals for a major new library, heritage and civic building on Walworth Road.

In addition to this our refurbishment programme has improved services at John Harvard, Dulwich, and Blue Anchor libraries. We have also invested substantially in new technology including RFID self-service technology, freeing staff to provide more help and support to customers as well as providing free internet access at all libraries and free Wi-Fi at ten of our 12 locations.

**9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES**

Can the leader of the council confirm the expected revenue on a monthly and yearly basis for the new Castle Leisure Centre and what the projected profit or loss is expected to be on running the centre on a yearly basis?

**RESPONSE**

Due to the current on-going procurement process for the tendering of the Leisure Management contract it is not possible to comment on this question at this time as this would compromise the procurement process.

**10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR VIJAY LUTHRA**

Can the leader give an update on the work the council is doing to crack down on illegal sub-letting of council homes?

**RESPONSE**

Southwark is in the top quartile for number of properties recovered – more than 1,000 since 2012 – as well as recovery as a percentage of stock. We have been nationally recognised as a leader in this area of work and received several awards.

The council has the following systems in place to tackle social housing fraud:

- Fraud and validation officers based in housing options who carry out fraud checks at the point of entry
- Resident services officers carry out a tenancy check every two years programme with 79.5% tenancy checks carried out over 18 months to September 2015
- Special investigations team carry out complex investigations resulting in defended trials and have identified two suitable cases for prosecution under the legislation making illegal subletting a criminal offence
- All right to buy applications are checked and visited where necessary as this has been identified as an emerging fraud risk with applications increasing due to the increase in the discount offered
- Continuing to publicise successful cases in the media
- The bi-annual National Fraud Initiative data matching results.

Our approach is to ensure that we prevent fraud from occurring in the first instance as it is less costly and time consuming than taking action after the event. This proactive approach is resulting in fewer 'straightforward' properties to recover. An example of proactive work is the recent launch of ILATCH, a new web based anti-fraud tool. Members of the public and estate agents can use ILATCH to check if a property is a part of the council's housing stock and is being illegally sublet. This then alerts the council that a property may be advertised as available to rent. We are then able to respond quickly to avoid deposits being exchanged and illegal subletting from taking place. Again, this will prevent fraud from happening in the first instance and vulnerable people from being exploited.

## **11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES**

Can the leader confirm that the plans for the Peckham multi-storey car park will support the local creative industry and enable the council to deliver on its promise to create new affordable studio and workshop spaces?

### **RESPONSE**

On 6 November 2015, the council announced that Pop Community Ltd have been selected as interim manager of the multi-storey car park in Peckham for the next five years and will be turning it into a mixture of artist studios and workshops, and co-work spaces, along with meeting spaces, which will support a thriving community of artists, small creative businesses and local entrepreneurs.

Pop Community were selected following a public call for proposals in August 2015, in which the council announced it was looking for organisations, businesses and individuals to pitch their ideas to turn Peckham's multi-storey car park into a hot spot for creative and cultural industries and to increase local employment. Proposals were sought that focus on creating workspace for the creative industries and other arts and culture uses, and to work alongside the current uses on the top floors, Bold Tendencies Arts and Frank's Bar. There was a high level of interest in the idea with over 70 approaches from organisations and individuals interested in space within the car park, which led to a total of 14 proposals submitted. Pop Community Ltd are the team behind the innovative "Pop Brixton" community campus, and are a partnership between Carl Turner Architects and developers The Collective, and were selected following a robust process to comparatively evaluate each proposals against the criteria in the brief.

The "Peckham Levels" project will deliver over 20,000 sq ft of artists' studios, maker workshops and shared workspace for young creative businesses with a further 20,000 sq ft of gallery, performance and multi-purpose events space. In addition, there will be a small element of pop-up retail space where the artistic community can promote and sell their work, and food and beverage units for independent traders from the local area. In addition to providing much-needed affordable studio and workspace, Peckham Levels will hugely benefit the wider community:

- All members will be independent artists and businesses, drawn primarily from the local area
- Members will be selected based not only on their artistic or entrepreneurial merit, but also on their commitment to contributing positively to the community around them
- The multi-purpose event space will be available for free use by local community groups for at least 25% of the time
- 600 jobs will be created throughout the course of the project
- 10% of the profits will be used to create a community fund, for reinvestment into local businesses, community groups and projects.

## **12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JOHNSON SITU**

Can the leader give an update on the regeneration projects currently being progressed in Peckham?



## **RESPONSE**

### **Peckham Rye Station Square**

The Peckham Rye Station square project will create the centre piece of the Peckham Regeneration programme. The project will deliver improved retail in refurbished railway arches and on Blenheim Grove. A new public square will enable the Grade II listed Peckham Rye station to be seen from Rye Lane and will provide an attractive point of arrival to the town centre. We hope this will lead to further investment in the station building, Holly Grove, Dovedale Court, Rye Lane and the wider Peckham area.

Following four CoDesign workshops, architects Landolt and Brown have developed and designed a scheme alongside the community that is reflective of the aspiration expressed in the workshops. A planning application was submitted on 23 October and is now being consulted on. The deadline for consultation responses and comments is 5 December 2015. The council anticipate that the application will be determined by February 2016. Subject to approval, construction will commence in the summer of 2016, phased to begin with the building on Blenheim Grove, followed by the demolition of the building on the south side of the square and finally demolition and completion of the north side of the square. The anticipated completion date is Spring 2018.

The council have appointed an independent business advisor to provide assistance and support to businesses affected by the project.

### **Bournemouth Close**

As part of the Peckham Rye Station Square project a number of retail tenants, mainly Afro-Caribbean hairdressers and nail bars, currently residing in the units along Blenheim Grove will need to be re-located during the construction phase. Earlier this year, Southwark Council appointed design studio Something & Son and business support specialists Tree Shepherd to work with these businesses to develop ideas for a bespoke centre for Afro-Caribbean hair and beauty in Peckham.

After a number of one to one interviews and group workshops, the team has developed 'Peckham Palms'. This new centre for hair and beauty draws its inspirations from Peckham's cultural heritage and distinctiveness and will cement Peckham's reputation as the leading destination for affordable and quality Black hair styling and beauty in London. Although some of the businesses are still anxious about how the move will affect businesses, most are looking forward to getting into their new premises.

### **Peckham Library Square**

See answer to question 16

### **TfL Pedestrian Pilots**

Southwark Council is working with Transport for London (TfL) to improve pedestrian safety in Peckham town centre. TfL have identified Peckham as one of two areas to take part in a pilot scheme which it is hoped will lead to safer town centres across London. This presents a great opportunity to make Peckham a safer and more accessible place for everyone. The consultant Atkins has been appointed to carry out a study looking at pedestrian movement and safety in Peckham and how this could be improved through a range of interventions. This work is funded by TfL and there is potential for further funding to address issues raised.

The initial study runs from September to December 2015 and will deliver an action plan which sets out potential strategies for improving pedestrian safety in the area. An initial community CoDesign workshop took place on Thursday 15 October and sought

to gather local views on the issues affecting pedestrians in the town centre area with a second workshop held on 5 November to discuss ideas for addressing these.

**Peckham multi-storey car park**

See answer to question 11

**Mountview, Eagle Wharf**

Following the cabinet approval in July, Mountview are further developing their proposals for the site. The legal and financial agreements will be in place by mid December. Their programme anticipates a planning application by spring 2016 with an opening of the building in September 2018. Consultation will take start in early December.

**Flaxyards and Copeland Road Car Park**

These sites are being taken forward for housing development through the Southwark Regeneration in Partnership initiative. It is anticipated that planning applications will be submitted in Spring 2016 with completion by March 2018.

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

What are the council's plans to ensure the best quality of further education provision in Southwark, for Camberwell specifically, and how are we working to ensure that the college [Lewisham and Southwark College] does not sell off the Camberwell site ahead of those plans being agreed?

**RESPONSE**

I met with Carole Kitching, the new principle of Lewisham and Southwark College last month to raise my concerns about the poor performance of the college, but also to offer her the council's support for her new role and ambitions.

As you are aware, Lewisham Southwark College has caused me concern as we have not really seen any tangible evidence of sustained improvement in outcomes for learners. In the summer we wrote to the FE commissioner and the Minister for Skills suggesting a new and innovative way forward for the borough that would have involved creating a new college for our residents in partnership with schools and some of the best providers working in the field. That letter received support from some of the biggest employers in the borough. The commissioner's preferred option was to give the college yet another chance. Undeterred, we are continuing to explore how we can work in partnership with outstanding providers, employers and schools to create a world class offer for our learners.

Nationally a review of further education is taking place through a series of local area reviews. We will take an active part in the process and ensure the needs of Southwark learners, including those that live in Camberwell are represented first and foremost in that process.

In respect of the old building, I am pleased to let you know that we have liaising with the Education Funding Agency who have bought the building and site as part of their free school programme. This will enable the building to continue to be used for education purposes and a new special school.

Proposals for this site will be reported to cabinet early in the new year.

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

The community council notes the likely reduction in policing in Southwark and requests confirmation of what the council will do to mitigate the impact that the reduction in police numbers, particularly police community support officers (PCSOs), will have on this community council area?

**RESPONSE**

The government has cut the Metropolitan Police's budget by 20% and it is widely expected that the Met will face at least another £800m cuts, which will have a significant impact on policing in Southwark and across the capital.

Unfortunately, at the same time as government is cutting police numbers it is also cutting local authority budgets. It is not possible for the council therefore to step in to cover the reduction in police numbers. We are calling on the government to stop further cuts to the Met budget and lobbying where we can to keep police numbers within the borough.

We are also working with our partners in the police to innovate in the way we provide services to make the most of our reducing resources. An example of this is the Business Crime Reduction Partnership which is to be officially launched in the Walworth road area in December 2015. Further phases will include Camberwell, Peckham, Better Bankside and Team London Bridge Business Improvement Districts.

At the same time, we are working to revitalise and extend the Neighbourhood Watch programme.

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

Can the cabinet member ensure that community councils have an input in deciding the priority of projects on the community infrastructure project list (CIPL) and that priority is decided by the local community?

**RESPONSE**

Cabinet agreed in March 2015 that Southwark will allocate at least 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy on projects in the local area whether there is an adopted neighbourhood plan or not. Under the Localism Act (2011) it was stipulated that the council must identify a "meaningful proportion" of Southwark CIL to be spent in the local area to ensure that those people directly affected by the development see some of the benefit. The "meaningful proportion" was defined as 25% of CIL funding where there is an adopted neighbour plan and 15% elsewhere. However the cabinet felt it was fairer for all that 25% was the adopted amount in all areas of the borough. The following sequence of areas were agreed in order to identify relevant projects:

1. Areas with adopted neighbourhood plans
2. Opportunity Areas
3. Action Areas
4. SPD areas (other than individual sites / buildings)
5. Community Council areas (i.e. those areas which are not covered by any of the above).

Lists have been created – the Community Infrastructure Project Lists (CIPL), which are project ideas created by the local community (defined as anyone who lives, works or studies in Southwark and local groups – for example, tenants and residents groups, youth groups, faith groups, community groups or sports clubs). These lists are agreed on an annual basis by the community councils. Officers are currently working with community councils to make sure that the priority of projects on the CIPL is decided by the local community and approved by that community council.

**16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND NEW HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR JOHNSON SITU (PECKHAM AND NUNHEAD COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Will the cabinet member for regeneration and new homes give an update to the Peckham and Nunhead community council on the Peckham Square arch?

**RESPONSE**

Since December 2014, residents and local businesses have been invited to take part in a CoDesign process for the development of 91-93 Peckham High Street and improvements to Peckham Square. A total of seven workshops have been held, the last one being on the 9 November.

After discussing the options for redeveloping the square and with local residents and whether to remove or retain Peckham Arch, in July 2015 a decision was made by the council to remove the arch and develop the two new buildings. Since then, three more workshops have been held to develop options for the two new buildings to create an attractive, accessible and active gateway in to the square.

The architects, CTA, have listened closely to what local residents have said they'd like to see in this development, from the materials on the outside, the height and massing to the internal layout and uses. The proposals are also being taken forward in the context of Mountview's proposal for the theatre academy at Eagle Wharf. The final workshop was held in November and the scheme will shortly be submitted to the planning department to commence pre-applications discussions ahead of the submission of a full application early in the new year.

The key benefits of this scheme include:

- Up to 17 new homes, some of which will be council homes.
- A new co-working space at ground floor to increase employment and small business opportunities for local people.
- A new community gallery space that opens up into the square and provides a more active frontage.
- An opportunity to address a number of accessibility issues regarding ramps and stairs into the square.
- An opportunity to redesign the entrance to the square to ease pedestrian / cyclist conflicts.
- Better views through to the square making it feel better connected to the high street.
- A better environment, encouraging more people to spend time in the square rather than just pass through.

**17. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM FROM COUNCILLOR JON HARTLEY (DULWICH COMMUNITY COUNCIL)**

Could the cabinet member for environment and public realm say whether there has been any progress on the consultative work undertaken by the council particularly in light of recent (public realm issues) in the Dulwich community council area and outline whether there are any steps the council could take in improving its consultation?

**RESPONSE**

The two workshops I attended in Dulwich in the last month have been very good. It gave me the opportunity to hear a wide range of views in relation to transport in general and cycling in particular in the area.

The outcomes of the workshops on Dulwich Community Council will be discussed on 2 December. There is always more we can do to improve our consultation in public realm and transport matters and I am working closely with officers on improving our approach and in particular trying hard to reach out to a wider cross-section of our community. The council's new on-line consultation hub is enhancing our on-line service for public realm and transport schemes; however, we will be doing more to improve our approach in the New Year. This is demonstrated by our enhanced pre-consultation engagement work undertaken by Sustrans on recent cycling Quietway schemes and with the large response we have had in Dulwich. We also included map-based on-line consultations as part of early engagement on two recent Quietway consultations, these were well received.

**18. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JAMILLE MOHAMMED**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the implementation of Universal Credit?

**RESPONSE**

Universal Credit (UC) rollout in Southwark commenced from 4 November 2015 and is so far limited to a single postcode district in the north of the borough (SE1 5~~).

The rollout is limited to new entrants and the great majority of those living in that area, and who are already claiming one or more of the existing working age benefits (income support, jobseekers allowance income based, employment and support allowance income based, working tax credit, child tax credit or housing benefit), will continue to do so and will be unaffected at this time. Pension age households will be entirely untouched by UC rollout.

The numbers of UC claimants to date is small and in line with forecasts. In the first week of UC rollout fifteen claims were made and we expect weekly claim numbers to remain at or about that level until such time as DWP decide to roll out UC to other parts of the borough.

The council is prepared for UC implementation to date and has entered into an operational delivery agreement with the DWP that confirms our readiness. Support is available and easily accessible for anyone claiming UC who may need help with aspects of the new system. For example, the way that UC is to be offered as a single household payment paid monthly; that UC will be provided as a digital service for almost all claimants or that housing costs will in most cases no longer be paid to the claimant's landlord.

However, the council has a number of serious concerns about UC implementation and its potentially negative impacts. We are engaging the DWP and we will of course be monitoring impacts on the ground very closely as UC rollout proceeds.

**19. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR MAISIE ANDERSON**

In expanding the council's digital offer and making more services available on the internet, can the cabinet member tell us what is being done to ensure more vulnerable residents are not left behind?

**RESPONSE**

The council has an ongoing project to ensure more vulnerable residents and their carers have the best possible opportunity to learn to use computers and the internet.

The Go-On Southwark digital inclusion project has 15 digital inclusion hubs based in local communities. There has been a donation of two laptops or tablet computers to each hub, a grant to install broadband where this is lacking, and 40 people have been trained as volunteer Digital Champions by Thames Reach Academy. The hubs are: Silverlock TRA; Elmington TRA; SGTO; Buchan TRA; Crawford TRA; North Peckham TRA; Lucy Brown Sheltered Housing Unit; Neckinger TRA; Southwark Travellers Action Group; Cambridge House Settlement; Blackfriars Settlement; Southwark HourBank; Time and Talents Settlement; Southwark Deaf Forum; Nunhead Community Centre.

There are 27 more volunteers being trained by the end of December. We expect 500 people to learn digital skills in 2015/16. The Tenants Fund Management Committee have indicated that they would like to support another 15 Tenant and Resident Associations to be digital hubs, if funding is available. The council staff team working on this project are already offering support to community, tenant and faith groups wishing to bid for a small grant of less than £5,000 to set themselves up as a Digital Hub. This work is supported by the council and other partners and includes sharing what has worked so far.

**20. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR BILL WILLIAMS**

Opposition councillors recently criticised the council for the new Director of Modernise role – can the cabinet member explain what this role will bring to the council?

**RESPONSE**

Whilst I appreciate the entertainment value of the job title, the Director of Modernise will have a very serious job to do.

The post holder will be responsible for large scale support services for the council's workforce and workplace including IT, Corporate Facilities Management, Human Resources, Organisational Development and business transformation.

The role provides strategic leadership for these services and the corporate responsibility for the modernisation of all council functions, including the successful delivery of the workforce strategy, IT strategy and digital business strategy.

With the council facing budget reductions of a £96m over the next three years it is essential that we radically transform and modernise the way we operate as a business, increasing productivity and efficiency and the quality of online customer services to enable us to further reduce back office costs and protect services for vulnerable residents.

**21. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH MCCALLUM**

Can the cabinet member update members on the council's 'Modernise' programme?

**RESPONSE**

The council has for some time used its "Modernise" brand to badge many change and transformation initiatives. It was first used when 160 Tooley Street was acquired and a large number of services moved into the building. Since then it has been applied to other initiatives including the Customer Access Programme, digital service delivery initiatives, and corporate service improvement programmes.

The council recognises that in order to positively meet the challenges of decreasing budgets, yet continue to meet the needs of customers, services will need to transform and modernise rapidly.

Modernise forms an important part of the council's recent senior management reorganisation. A Director of Modernise will be recruited shortly who will be responsible for the key enabling services of HR, Organisational Development, IT and Corporate Facilities Management.

They will lead on a review of all council functions and set in train a raft of modernising projects to transform the way services are delivered, including the refinement of the council's workforce, accommodation and digital strategies.

**22. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR NICK DOLEZAL**

What impact does the cabinet member believe the Chancellor's proposals for an additional 30% cut to the Department of Communities and Local Government will have on Southwark's budget and the implications for services?

**RESPONSE**

Since 2010, local government has experienced unprecedented reductions in government funding. During this period, Southwark has been one of the most significantly affected local authorities not only in London, but across the whole of the country. The council has delivered £156m of savings as funding has been cut and as costs and demands for services have increased. At the same time, we have seen the emerging impact of welfare reform policies being imposed by this government and the crisis in the London housing market and especially the implications for homelessness in the borough.

In September, cabinet received a report that highlighted the new pressures moving forward. At that time, London Councils were projecting further cuts in funding over the next three years of around £76m; taking all other factors into account such as inflation, pay awards and demand for services, that leaves a total gap of £96m to be met through further savings. At that meeting, cabinet refreshed the council's Fairer Future

budget principles that will be upheld as we seek to achieve this target and to manage our finances and balance our budget while we continue to support the residents of Southwark and not least the most vulnerable in our community.

On 25 November 2015 (today) we have heard the announcement by the Chancellor of the Comprehensive Spending Review that sets out the immediate challenge for local government and cabinet will be receiving a further report on 8 December 2015 updating our forward looking budget position and changes that will be needed to our Medium Term Resourcing Strategy to deal with the future loss of funding. We will continue to consult on the proposals contained within this forthcoming report, mindful that Southwark residents have consistently given us clear messages over a number of years that want us to protect the most vulnerable and front line services, cut back office functions as deeply as possible and to be more efficient. These priorities will remain at the heart of our proposals as we await final confirmation of our provisional grant settlement for the next three years that we are unlikely to see until the middle of December.

**23. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR JASMINE ALI**

Can the cabinet member provide reassurance that protecting the frontline services that residents value will continue to be prioritised in the council's budget despite the significant cuts?

**RESPONSE**

Since 2010, even by the government's conservative measures, we have lost £91 million in spending power - in fact as costs and demands for services have increased we've actually had to make £156m of savings. We will not know for sure until mid-December, but the current best estimates are that we face a budget gap of £96m, a further third of our budget, over the next three years.

Throughout this period of funding cuts we have listened to our residents and protected the services they said mattered most and have made large savings in back office staff and management costs.

In the coming years our funding will decrease even further and we are going to have to make some difficult decisions about how we continue to deliver services.

Sadly the extent of the forecast cuts mean that it is impossible for me to guarantee that we will be able to fully protect all front line services in the coming years and this position will not be unique to Southwark. But we will stick to our budget principles and we will continue to invest in our borough, protect key services and deliver on the council's Fairer Future commitments and priorities.

**24. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL FLEMING**

Can the cabinet member indicate the impact on services of the Conservative government's decision to impose an in year cut to the public health grant?

**RESPONSE**

In June this year, with no prior warning, the Treasury announced that the 2015/16



public health grant to local authorities would be reduced by £200 million. Imposing an in-year cut of this nature with no warning is completely unacceptable and makes it impossible for local authorities to have any planning certainty in setting budgets for the year.

Following some months of consultation the council has now been advised that £1.6m will be deducted from the 2015/16 Public Health Grant previously notified. This amount had been fully committed by the council to public health activities that are ring fenced under the terms of this grant. Immediate action has been taken to freeze any non-essential and uncommitted spend on public health services.

Contracts are currently being reviewed to consider management action and options for implementing the in year cut.

There will be unavoidable impact from such a significant budget cut by government – we of course will do all we can to mitigate that impact on our community, prioritising the remaining spend on our most pressing challenges, such as childhood obesity and tackling health inequalities to deliver a fairer future for all.

On a wider scale, it is likely that continued cuts to public health funding will have a significant impact on NHS spending and therefore increase costs in the long term. The announcement of this cut raises serious questions about the government's commitment to health prevention, which has the potential to improve health outcomes as well as being more cost effective in the long term.

**25. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PARKS AND LEISURE FROM COUNCILLOR SANDRA RHULE**

Can the cabinet member provide an update on the implementation of the Fairer Future promise to introduce Free Gym and Swim access for all residents in Southwark?

**RESPONSE**

The council believes that the best way to be proactive about health and wellbeing is by prevention, and by making it easier for people to make healthier choices and to achieve a more active lifestyle.

The council also recognises how tough the issue of obesity is nationally and locally, especially among young people, and over the last few years we have been looking at how to proactively tackle the issue head on. Our council plan promise of Free Gym and Swim is a step forward for making it easier for people to make healthier choices and to remove the economic barriers so our residents can achieve a more active lifestyle.

The application process for the Southwark Free Swim and Gym scheme was opened on Saturday 21 March 2015 and the pilot scheme was launched on 23 May 2015 to Southwark residents aged 18 and under or over 60. This phased implementation was to manage the demand for the scheme and to learn lessons leading up to the launch of the general offer in July 2016 which will be delivered through the new leisure management contract.

Since the application process opened over 6,500 residents have signed up the scheme. From the pilot launch in May to October there was 12,377 attendances, this includes 4,527 18s-and-under and 7,850 over 60s.

A full update report on the free swim and gym scheme is planned for February 2016 to coincide with the Gateway 2 report for the Leisure Management Contract procurement.

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

Could the cabinet member update council assembly on consultation with the public and stakeholders in arriving at firm plans for major investment and improvements for Southwark Park?

**RESPONSE**

As one of London's oldest parks, Southwark Park is an important part of the history of Southwark. There has been significant capital investment in Southwark Park's infrastructure, but some areas remain in need of improvement. The café is unable to adequately meet the needs of the many park visitors and the current public toilets are only accessible during café opening hours. The park office doubles as an information point and accommodation for staff and is housed in a temporary structure of minimal visual attraction or distinction.

The investment is for the central area masterplan of Southwark Park which will see the park office, café and public toilets relocated to the hub of the park where the gallery, lake and children's playground are located. The investment will also see the Old Nursery site transformed into a controlled use area for use by local schools and community groups.

This project has been driven by The Friends of Southwark Park who have been active in applying for funding applications towards improving the Old Nursery site. They were successful in securing a Cleaner Greener Safer bid towards this project.

The first phase of consultation was carried out in February – March 2015. 216 individuals completed the survey, 70 per cent of whom lived within the SE1 area. Consultation was carried out through a survey, exhibition, stakeholder event and Residents event (for those living in Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way).

The questionnaire was advertised through a wide range of channels, including via the council website and Twitter account, on posters displayed across the park, in emails and letters sent to stakeholders, and in leaflets distributed to approximately 6,000 households in the vicinity of the park.

The majority of advertisements carried a link to an online version of the survey, while hard copies were available at the park exhibition and at the public and stakeholder meetings that were held.

During the exhibition display boards illustrating the architects' vision of how the changes would look were installed near the play area at the Gomm Road entrance. The exhibition was advertised on the council website, on posters within the park and via the council's Twitter account. It was open daily from 10am until 2pm during the February half term holiday (16 – 20 February), and during the same time window at weekends from 21 February until the closure of the consultation.

The stakeholder event provided organisations with a key interest in the park with an opportunity to discuss the plans with Southwark Council staff. After the plans had been outlined to the group, a question and answer session was held, and attendees were encouraged to fill in the online survey. Groups in attendance included:

- Friends of Southwark Park
- Southwark Park Café management
- Parks staff
- Mayflower Tenants and Residents Association
- Cavendish School
- Compass School
- Bermondsey Artists
- London City Athletics Club
- Rotherhithe ward councillors.

The residents' event was attended by residents of Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way. Attendees provided feedback on the plans during a twenty-minute question and answer session with Southwark staff. Three options of each scheme were presented to the public via all these channels. For the Old Nursery site these were:

- a. Option A: Creation of formal gardens with option for a new park entrance
- b. Option B: Creation of informal gardens with option for a new park entrance
- c. Option C: Creation of an access only area for school or community use.

Option C was the preferred option with 44 per cent of the respondents choosing this one. Primary concerns regarding an open access site related to safety and security; residents felt uncomfortable with the idea of park users being able to get so close to their homes and back gardens.

The three options for the location of the park office, public toilets and café were as follows:

- a. Option A: New building incorporating all three located close to the existing park office
- b. Option B: New building incorporating all three located close to the existing park office but orientated to provide views from the café towards the play area.
- c. Option C: Refurbishment of the existing gallery building and extended to form a combined park café, art gallery and park office.

Option C was the preferred location with 47 per cent of the respondents choosing this one. Residents ascribed particular importance to the idea that any new toilet facilities should not be 'out of sight' and felt that Option C delivered this, as well as being most likely to maximise the use of the existing café gallery. The second phase of consultation will take place in January 2016 following the development of a detailed design by the appointed building and landscape architect.

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

Can the cabinet member provide an update on progress towards a brand new track and field facility for Southwark?

**RESPONSE**

The installation of the new athletics facilities at Southwark Park have progressed well over 2015. The phase 1 project which has focused on reinstating the athletics track and field facilities are due to complete by the end of the year, although the facility will not be usable until the grass pitch has established in spring/summer 2016. The

building refurbishment project (phase 2) will seek planning approval in December 2015, and it is envisaged that the works will be complete in summer 2016.

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

Could the cabinet member provide an update on progress towards meeting the commitment to double the number of health checks received by the public?

**RESPONSE**

I am delighted to inform council that – this week – we passed our 2015 target to provide 7,000 healthchecks to the people of Southwark. We are therefore well on course to meet our aim to double the number of healthchecks in Southwark by 2018.

I would encourage everyone who is eligible for a healthcheck to get down to their local GP or one of our new pharmacy pilots and take up this important offer.

A healthcheck can help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease and certain types of dementia. But a healthcheck is more than just an important check – our expert staff provide support and help for those who want to eat better, exercise more or improve their health in other ways. For those in need of help, a healthcheck can be the first step towards reaching the right clinical help; or to access exercise, stop smoking and weight management services to make those important first steps towards an improved lifestyle.

In the coming months, the council will be refreshing our agreement with the local CCG for provision of local public health services – and our commitment around healthchecks will be at the heart of this new agreement.

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

Could the cabinet member set out plans for the latest stage of investment in Burgess Park?

**RESPONSE**

A significant consultation on the Burgess Park master plan was undertaken in early 2015. The objective of this consultation was to gauge what people who use the park think about the Burgess Park master plan with a view to updating the plan prior to delivering the next phase of improvements. The consultation also sought to identify the priorities in terms of improvements for the next phase of delivery.

There were two phases of consultation and each phase received approximately 2000 responses. The final master plan can be viewed on the council's website ([http://www.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/download/3998/shape\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_burgess\\_park](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/download/3998/shape_the_future_of_burgess_park)).

People who use the park have told us what they want us to do next, and as a result we will be investing £7.2 million (capital funding plus section 106 funding) into:

- the southern entrance project
- installing new toilets near the lake
- improving the toilets at Chumleigh Gardens

- repairing the Glengall Wharf garden wall
- improving drainage on the east side of the park.

Planning permission has been approved for both the Chumleigh toilets and lake toilets with the aim of having both projects completed by the summer of 2016.

Consultation has been undertaken on the southern entrance project with a further round of consultation planned in the new year prior to submitting a planning application in the summer of 2016.

The concept proposals for the southern entrance include increased green space through compulsory purchasing three parcels of adjacent land, a new play area, increased biodiversity including a large pond, outdoor gym, cycle ways and increased planting.

We will also be bidding to sports governing bodies to try and secure further funding to improve the Sports Centre hub and tennis courts.

**30. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR KIERON WILLIAMS**

Following the decision of HC-One to close their Camberwell Green nursing home, can the cabinet member provide assurance that the council is doing everything possible to help the residents and their families to find alternative good quality care?

**RESPONSE**

HC-One made the decision to close Camberwell Green nursing home on 23 September 2015. There are currently 38 residents in the nursing home, of which 25 places are funded by the local authority. The council is overseeing the safe transfer of all residents to new placements and Southwark Adult Social Care (ASC) is working closely with NHS colleagues to ensure that suitable placements are secured for all of the affected residents.

**Support offered by London Borough of Southwark to residents and families**

A team of social workers are currently reviewing residents and linking with their families to assess their individual needs and preferences. The CCG is actively seeking placements for residents whom they fund. Other local authorities that have residents placed at Camberwell Green have been notified and are working towards finding alternative placements. The council's social work team is also providing advice and support to residents and their families who are 'Self Funders'.

The council's community social work team has attended residents and relatives meetings. Each resident has a named social worker that they can contact and is regularly available at the home. Advocates have been commissioned for residents without family.

Adult social care (ASC) officers holds regular meetings with HC-One to monitor progress and weekly conference calls are held between ASC, Camberwell Green management and other key professionals to provide updates on the location of placements and the movement of residents.

Residents and their families who have requested placements outside of the borough are supported by ASC care brokerage team to find suitable placements in their area of choice and to negotiate fees.

### **Alternative nursing home provision in Southwark**

The majority of residents and their families would like to remain in Southwark. However, presently there is an embargo on placing new residents at the two other nursing homes in Southwark - Tower Bridge, which is managed by HC-One, and Burgess Park run by Four Seasons.

The embargos were put in place by Southwark due to concerns in regards to the standards of care delivered by these nursing homes. The council and the CCG have been working closely with the management of these homes to improve standards of care.

Both Tower Bridge and Burgess Park have new managers in place, who with the support of their respective organisations have been making significant improvements to clinical standards of care. ASC senior management have been meeting with regional managers of HC-One and Four Seasons to discuss improvements in Tower Bridge and Burgess Park and the sustainability of care provision in Southwark.

The ASC commissioning team and safeguarding adults team has been visiting the homes regularly to monitor progress. It is hoped that both of these homes will come off embargo at the next CQC inspection, which is due imminently.

It is important to note that we are working in the context of a national shortage of nursing home accommodation which is hampering the location of placements outside of Southwark. Of the 25 Southwark funded residents, 16 have requested to remain in borough. When Tower Bridge and Burgess Park care homes come off embargo there will be sufficient placements available to provide alternative accommodation in Southwark.

We are currently working on an Accommodation With Care Strategy for the borough, which will enable us to make changes for the future, to increase local choice of high quality care in the borough. Councillors will have the opportunity to comment on that early next year.

### **31. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL**

Can the cabinet member set out exactly what targeted consultation took place with mental health service users regarding the council's new adult social care fairer contributions policy?

#### **RESPONSE**

We carried out targeted and extensive consultation with our mental health service users by sending out individual letters and consultation documents, including a link to the online information and telephone details. This was sent to all known recipients of non-residential mental health services.

Consultation documents were also sent to voluntary sector organisations working with mental health service users and we held two consultation meetings, one for the voluntary sector on 15 July 2015 and one for service users on 25 August 2015 and

questions were encouraged at both meetings. These meetings were an invaluable part of the consultation process.

Mental health service users were also encouraged to phone or email any responses to the consultation and these were collated and taken into account within the full consultation process.

We excluded service users who are covered under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act as these residents who are entitled to free care when they leave hospital.

Our social work teams were also given all of the consultation information to enable them to refer enquiries on behalf of service users.

**32. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

Can the cabinet member report on how many truancy fines are issued each year by each school in the borough, how many are paid/unpaid and how many parents are prosecuted?

**RESPONSE**

The fines that the council directly administers in relation to attendance are fixed penalty notices, introduced in August 2014 and issued primarily in respect of holiday-related unauthorised absence during term time.

Between August 2014 and November 2015, 128 fixed penalty notices have been issued. 13 fines remained unpaid after 28 days.

39% of FPN referrals from schools were from academy/non-maintained schools.

**33. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES OKOSUN**

Please set out, broken down by year, the numbers of parents in Southwark who have lodged appeals over their children not being offered a place at their chosen school and the percentage whose appeal was successful over each of the past five years.

**RESPONSE**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No of Appeals</b>	<b>No of Appeals Upheld</b>
2010/11	54	14
2011/12	53	14
2012/13	73	4
2013/14	32	2
2014/15	52	4
2015/16	29	1

**34. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM FROM COUNCILLOR DAMIAN O'BRIEN**

Can the cabinet member update councillors on the TfL-funded scheme to stop idling vehicle engines and reduce emissions around Tower Bridge?

## RESPONSE

The Tower Bridge Anti-Idling Project was funded under the Mayor's Air Quality Fund and is entirely funded by a combination of the Mayor's Air Quality Fund, LB Southwark LIP, LB Tower Hamlets and DEFRA.

The project is dedicated to improving air quality in the capital and tackling emissions from all sources, including transport, buildings and construction and demolition sites. It is also designed to raise awareness about the dangers of allowing engines to remain idle.

The project involves the erection of variable message signage on approach roads to Tower Bridge which ask drivers to switch off their engines when Tower Bridge is open. The project is for the signage to be in operation for six months and air quality monitoring before, during and after the operation.

There have been delays to the project and these have largely related to:

1. Obtaining access to a data feed from TfL (data on bridge opening times) and;
2. Difficulties in the installation of appropriate air quality monitoring equipment.

Funding table below:

Tower Bridge anti idling	Amount in £,000			Total funding
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	
Funding from Mayor's AQ fund	40	55	5	100
Southwark - Lip	17	17	6	40
Tower Hamlets	10	10	10	30
DEFRA (via Tower Hamlets)	20	0	0	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>190</b>

### 35. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL

Can the cabinet member report on progress with proposals to exempt or offer a lower charge to residents on lower incomes from the council's new bulky waste collection fee?

## RESPONSE

Overview and scrutiny committee recommended that consideration and evidence is given within 3 months in regards to giving exemption or offering a number of [bulky waste] collections free of charge to the poorest and most vulnerable residents.

There are financial, policy and practical implications associated with this recommendation and investigatory work is required to determine the response. The investigations include making contact with other London boroughs to seek information about how their bulky waste collection services operate.

This work is on-going and as yet is not complete.

A full response will be provided to the January 2016 overview and scrutiny committee.



**36. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

Please outline any changes to community safety services for residents as part of the council's recent service restructure and what public consultation has taken place either before or during these changes.

**RESPONSE**

The recent management restructure has not affected front line services, with the same services provided to the same standards to residents as before.

The real benefit of the restructure is that as well as making savings from management rather than front line staff, it has enabled us to bring all the enforcement functions within environment and leisure into one service: regulatory services. We can therefore now look at all of these functions to ensure that we have a more streamlined and efficient response to problems such as busking and fly-tipping.

**37. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER**

Please set out the level of housing right-to-buy receipts to the council over the past five years and how much has been spent within three years locally on new council/affordable homes.

**RESPONSE**

Councils have been able to use some of the receipts from Right to Buy (RTB) improve or build housing stock since 1999. Prior to April 2012, there were no restrictions on how they could be used and so receipts were primarily used to fund the council's cyclical repairs programme.

2010/11 RTB receipts retained: £2.9m. A further £0.5m was remitted to government.  
2011/12 RTB receipts retained: £2.1m. A further £1.5m was remitted to government.

From April 2012, Southwark entered into an agreement with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to enable it to retain a large element of RTB receipts as a contribution towards building new homes. The remainder of these receipts are either remitted to government or used for debt repayment.

	<b>2012/13 £m</b>	<b>2013/14 £m</b>	<b>2014/15 £m</b>	<b>Total £m</b>
Gross RTB receipts	15.3	48.5	61.1	124.9
Less: Purchaser discount	-6.8	-23.6	-29.4	-59.8
<b>Net RTB receipts</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>65.1</b>
Less: amount retained for debt repayments/ buyback	-2.1	-6.0	-7.7	-15.8
Less: amount remitted to government	-3.0	-3.5	-3.8	-10.3
<b>Retained receipts for new build</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>39.0</b>

DCLG stipulated that the RTB receipts could fund no more than 30% of the cost of the new homes and must be spent within three years of receipt. The council therefore applies receipts, oldest first, to new build expenditure once it arises in subsequent

years. The council must also find other funding sources to cover at least 70% of the cost for each development.

As a result, the £39m of RTB receipts retained will be used over the period to 2017/18 to provide around 24% of the funding for the new build programme which is projected to spend £165m to that stage. Developer contributions, grant, borrowing and other capital receipts make up the remaining 76% of funding. Beyond 2017/18 similar sources of funding will be used as they arise.

The figures for the use of these RTB receipts from 2012/13, 213/14 and 2014/15 are set out below.

<b>2012/13 RTB (94 properties sold)</b> Right to Buy receipts retained for new build Receipts applied to new build capital schemes	£3.4m £0.1m in 2012/13 £0.6m in 2013/14 £2.6m in 2014/15 £0.1m in 2015/16 projected
<b>2013/14 RTB (250 properties sold)</b> Right to Buy receipts retained for new build Receipts applied to new build capital schemes	£15.4m £10.5m in 2015/16 projected £4.9m in 2016/17 projected
<b>2014/15 RTB (304 properties sold)</b> Right to Buy receipts retained for new build Receipts applied to new build capital schemes	£20.2m £6.3m in 2016/17 projected £13.9m in 2017/18 projected

**38. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND NEW HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR LUCAS GREEN**

Could the cabinet member update me on progress on securing 44 social rent units from Notting Hill Housing Trust to replace the units that should have been delivered at The Exchange in Bermondsey Spa?

**RESPONSE**

See question 7

**39. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND NEW HOMES FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN**

What benefits have British Land guaranteed the borough in return for the council changing its previous preferred site for the new leisure centre at Canada Water to the wildlife area in summer 2015, including the number of any social housing units?

**RESPONSE**

The regeneration of Canada Water offers a unique opportunity for a significant new town centre with thousands of new homes and jobs, as well as a new leisure centre.

The cabinet has not changed its preferred site for the new leisure centre. In 2013 an initial piece of work looked in isolation at where a new leisure centre might be built, without the benefit of a comprehensive masterplan for the whole of Canada Water and without consultation with landowners which is essential to ensure delivery. We now have the opportunity to include the new facility as part of the comprehensive planning

of an entire new town centre which means that the 2013 report no longer has much practical application.

Cabinet determined in November 2014 to invest £2m in maintaining the existing Seven Islands Leisure while a new facility is developed within the emerging Canada Water town centre. Subsequently a preferred site for the new facility was identified and has now been confirmed within phase one of the British Land masterplan. There will be detailed consultation with local residents and those from the wider area on this preferred location before a final decision is taken next year.

This month cabinet agreed a Heads of Terms document with British Land for a development agreement that will see a major 5.5m sq ft brand new town centre regeneration of Canada Water. This agreement covers three main sites: the former Print Works, the Surrey Quays Shopping Centre and the Mast Leisure Centre. In combination this 46 acre site provides a unique opportunity to develop a new town centre for Central London comprising new homes, affordable homes, offices, shops, leisure, restaurants, parks and open spaces.

At a time of austerity when other councils are closing down leisure facilities, Southwark is planning to invest over £20 million in a brand new leisure centre for the residents of Canada Water, Rotherhithe, and Bermondsey, replacing the outdated facility at Seven Islands. The masterplan is now in development with extensive consultation planned for early in the New Year.