

Item No. 5.2	Classification: Open	Date: 25 March 2020	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Members' Motions	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The councillor introducing or “moving” the motion may make a speech directed to the matter under discussion. This may not exceed five minutes¹.

A second councillor will then be asked by the Mayor to “second” the motion. This may not exceed three minutes without the consent of the Mayor.

The meeting will then debate the issue and any amendments on the motion will be dealt with.

At the end of the debate the mover of the motion may make a concluding speech, known as a “right of reply”. If an amendment is carried, the mover of the amendment shall hold the right of reply to any subsequent amendments and, if no further amendments are carried, at the conclusion of the debate on the substantive motion.

The Mayor will then ask councillors to vote on the motion (and any amendments).

IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution allocates responsibility for particular functions to council assembly, including approving the budget and policy framework, and allocates to the cabinet responsibility for developing and implementing the budget and policy framework and overseeing the running of council services on a day-to-day basis. Therefore any matters that are reserved to the cabinet (i.e. housing, social services, regeneration, environment, education etc) cannot be decided upon by council assembly without prior reference to the cabinet. While it would be in order for council assembly to discuss an issue, consideration of any of the following should be referred to the cabinet:

- to change or develop a new or existing policy
- to instruct officers to implement new procedures
- to allocate resources.

Note: In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.10 (7) & (8) (prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the order in which motions appear in the agenda may not necessarily be the order in which they are considered at the meeting.

¹ Council assembly procedure rule 1.14 (9)

1. **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE** (Seconded by Councillor Adele Morris)

Tree Protection

1. Council assembly notes that:
 - a. Since 2010, Southwark Council has seen a net loss of more than 1200 trees despite making £600K of funding available for tree planting over 5 years in 2015;
 - b. Since 2018, over 1500 trees have been cut down and only 500 planted, resulting in a net loss of 1000 trees in just 2 years;
 - c. In April 2019, Southwark Council declared a Climate Emergency but this has not stemmed the net loss of trees;
 - d. In 2020/2021 there are plans to cut down 100s more trees without a clear strategy for replacement.
2. Council assembly further notes that:
 - a. Southwark is one of the worst boroughs for air quality and trees are an important factor in improving this;
 - b. Over a year, a mature tree can remove approximately 22kg of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Replacing an older tree with a younger tree worsens the carbon footprint and takes years to make up the equivalent;
 - c. Many of the trees removed are flowering varieties including pink and white cherry blossoms and hence Southwark has reduced colour in Spring. This also affects the bio-diversity, especially for pollinators such as bees;
 - d. Trees play an important part in the mental health and well-being of humans as well as the biosphere.
3. Council assembly asserts that:
 - a. Southwark Council are not doing enough to protect our tree cover almost 12 months after its Climate Emergency declaration;
 - b. Urgent action is required now to stop further harm to tree cover.
4. Council assembly therefore calls upon cabinet to direct officers to:
 - a. Suspend any further tree removal in a ward unless signed off by ward councillors;
 - b. Investigate why so many trees have been lost in the last 10 years and report back to the overview and scrutiny committee or relevant commission with an action plan to address this;
 - c. Investigate and implement controls for ward councillors to protect trees and be more involved in decision making and reviewing plans regarding tree works and tree replacement in their wards going forward.

Note: If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

2. **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ALICE MACDONALD** (Seconded by Councillor Catherine Rose)

International Women's Day

1. Council assembly notes that:
 - a. 2020 is a pivotal year for advancing gender equality worldwide. It is the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, UN

Women launches the Generation Equality campaign, and it marks ten years until the deadline to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals which have gender equality at their heart.

- b. 8 March marked International Women's Day – a day to celebrate the political, social and economic advancement of women while recognising the urgent need for further movement.
- c. At the current rate of progress it will take 99 years to close the global gender gap. The facts don't lie: nearly one third of all women in the UK don't earn a wage they can live on, domestic abuse homicides are at their highest level for 5 years and women still only make up 32% of MPs and 35% of councillors across England.
- d. We cannot achieve global equality without acting locally. A century ago, Bermondsey Councillor Ada Salter, was embarking upon a notable decade of delivery, to improve the lives and environment of thousands of women and children through her work on the Beautification Committee and her tenure as London's first female Mayor. Her influence within the Bermondsey Settlement began much earlier and her local leadership would continue throughout the 1930s, working with and leading the way for other notable politicians, such as Eveline Lowe and Jessie Burgess. Their leadership and strength of ambition for municipal housing, healthcare and services for women was critical to the establishment of the post-war Welfare State and the Green Belt around London and beyond. Their belief in creating resilient families through opportunity, education and employment for women was transformative. They championed air quality, urban parks and open spaces in London with remarkable foresight, for which we remain indebted to and inspired by. Through their roles as elected councilors and civic leaders, they spoke up for and represented thousands of Southwark women, over half of our population. They improved Southwark for everyone.

2. Council assembly further:

- a. Pays tribute to past and present female pioneers - from politicians to community activists - from across the borough who have fought for greater women's rights and transformed their communities.
- b. Welcomes the policies and actions already implemented by Southwark Council to advance women's rights including the first ever Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, the Women's Safety Charter, the Sanctuary scheme, the living wage, the Ethical Care Charter and investment in services from healthcare and housing to education.
- c. Welcomes the commitment in the council's Workforce Strategy to review current parental and carers' leave policies for officers to ensure they are best practice.
- d. Welcomes Southwark's commitment to becoming the first equal pay borough so all our contractors must publish their gender pay gap and how they will reduce it.
- e. Recognises that we all have a responsibility as individuals, councillors and in the communities we serve to advance gender equality, for example encouraging more women to stand for elected office, to take up community leadership positions, supporting measures to secure gender balanced leadership or calling out gender discrimination wherever we see it.

3. Council assembly calls on cabinet to:

- a. Establish a programme of initiatives, inspired by Ada Salter, in the run up to the 2022 local elections to encourage more women and other under-

represented groups to stand for elected office or to become civic leaders, place makers and community activists. This will include:

- i. Working with schools, Southwark's Youth Council, Southwark Young Pioneers, the SGTO Youth Forum and other local advocacy groups to help build the next generation of women leaders.
 - ii. Engaging with and creating a forum for women, currently working and living in Southwark, that are shaping the modern built and green environment, open spaces and air quality in the borough. To facilitate these women coming together to support each other; develop and interpret anew for the 21st century, the principles and aspirations of Ada Salter and other pioneering women of Southwark.
 - iii. Supporting key stakeholders to influence and enrich our council's planning and policy frameworks to reflect the needs and lived experience of women and children in regards to housing, development and infrastructure improvements.
- b. Take proactive measures in the council to encourage women to stand for elected office and support them when they are elected. This should include:
- i. Facilitating the police to provide all councillors and council candidates with training on the legal protection available against online and offline abuse and harassment.
 - ii. Supporting similar training to be made available to local women community campaigners and young women activists in particular.
 - iii. Providing the option of remote attendance as standard practice for councillors at officer briefings and committee agenda setting meetings and putting in place the necessary technology.
- c. Continue to raise awareness and encourage action to tackle violence against women and girls including working with schools to address sexual harassment, reviewing the impact of the women's safety charter, extending the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation to council housing resident services and encouraging other major landlords to also seek accreditation.
- d. Review how to improve and strengthen its work and commitments to promote gender equality including reviewing the 2015 Diversity Standard.
- e. Establish a cross-party working group to review current parental and carers' leave policies and working practices for councillors.
- f. Ask the audit, governance and standards committee to review the current code of conduct to ensure it adequately addresses gender bias, sexism and discrimination.

4. Council assembly calls on the Leader to:

- a. Ensure there is a cabinet member with specific responsibility for women and girls rights to ensure this is holistically addressed.

Note: If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

3. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR MARIA LINFORTH-HALL (Seconded by Councillor Humaira Ali)

Street Champions

1. Council assembly notes that:

- a. In 2004, when running the council, the Liberal Democrats introduced a programme of 'Street Leaders' to encourage active resident participation in their neighbourhoods which was active for 10 years till around 2013;
 - b. As government cuts continue in the budgets for public services, Local government must find and trial new ways of delivering such services including getting citizens more involved and sharing the burden of cost with encouraging engagement and volunteering among citizens;
 - c. Southwark Labour pledged in 2018 that "Everyone should have a place that they are proud to call home" and "people of every race, religion, gender, sex, sexuality, age and ability" should feel safe in Southwark";
 - d. There are public funds of considerable sums which Southwark Council encourages residents to pitch for year on year such as Cleaner Greener Safer, Neighbourhoods Fund and Devolved Highways Fund to improve Southwark and its streets. These grants rely on Southwark residents being active, engaged, knowledgeable and caring for their environment.
2. Council assembly further notes that:
- a. Encouraging resident engagement through Neighbourhood Watch and other safety programmes helps with crime prevention and safety. However, there is no longer any overarching Southwark programme like Street Leaders for fostering neighbourhood regeneration and the spirit of community engagement;
 - b. In 2016, Lambeth trialled a programme called 'Street Champions' across 170 streets, where residents on a street are invited to coordinate efforts to improve street cleanliness and attractiveness with support from the council - such as advice and physical equipment²;
 - c. The pilot results showed more street beautification and greater satisfaction with the local area as well as improved perceptions of social interaction. Although a simple invitation got some interest, incentives led to much more. These included free garden waste collection, community-wide extrinsic incentives, e.g. removal of graffiti and identity incentives focusing on a citizen's identity as a Street Champion, e.g. hi-vis vest or a Meet the Mayor day;
 - d. Lambeth has since rolled out the Street Champion programme across the borough providing training and support as well as insurance for those volunteers who sign up.
3. Council assembly asserts that:
- a. A Street Champions programme in Southwark could improve resident engagement and further support the Empowering Communities programme;
 - b. This could result in improved use of council funds across the council grants schemes;
 - c. It could also encourage greater resident responsibility for their neighbours including checking on elderly neighbours when the weather's cold; take parcels in when neighbours are out; and who care about their street and want it to be a clean, safe and neighbourly place.
4. Council assembly therefore calls on cabinet to direct officers to:
- a. Investigate implementing a Street Champions pilot in Southwark in 2020/2021 by reviewing the Lambeth (and other) scheme(s) and reporting back on the benefits, and learning points.

² An evaluation of different ways to incentivise citizens to co-produce public services in Lambeth, Institute Fiscal Studies Briefing Note BN184, July 2016

- b. To devise an action plan for this pilot to improve Southwark's engagement with residents and Southwark's support to encourage them in acting as good neighbours.

Note: If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

4. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR LEANNE WERNER (Seconded by Councillor Cleo Soanes)

Council powers to address the Climate Emergency

1. Council assembly notes:
 - a. That in March 2019 Southwark Council declared a climate emergency.
 - b. Southwark's commitment to tackling the climate emergency in every aspect, and at every level of the council's work, including regeneration and the construction of new homes across the borough.
 - c. That unlike Southwark Council, this Conservative Government has failed to act in a decisive way to tackle the climate emergency.
 - d. That the Government is instead making it harder for local authorities to take the necessary action to reduce carbon emissions through their proposals for the Future Homes Standard, including :
 - i. Removing local authorities' powers to demand greater energy efficiency or lower carbon emissions than the building regulations, thereby preventing local authorities from reaching their own carbon reduction targets.
 - ii. Allowing the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard to be ignored, making it harder for councils to demand high efficiency standards and making it likely that new homes will have to be retrofitted with improved energy efficiency measures in just a few years time.
 - iii. Not considering embodied carbon, unlike Southwark's current planning framework.
 - e. That if the current proposals to restrict local planning authorities from setting a higher energy efficiency standard were to be implemented, national CO₂ reduction targets would be below the levels currently required in the London Plan.
2. Council assembly believes:
 - a. That local authorities are best placed to set ambitious, meaningful and achievable carbon reduction targets.
 - b. That the Government should therefore not place restrictions on the ability of local authorities to set carbon emission or energy efficiency standards.
 - c. That if the Government were to do this, the ability for local councils to tackle the climate emergency in the development and housing sector would be significantly reduced.
3. Council assembly welcomes:
 - a. The letter to Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government from Councillors Johnson Situ and Richard Livingstone expressing concern over these proposed changes, calling on the government to reconsider the proposals, and urging them to continue to allow local authorities to set local planning policy.
4. Council assembly resolves to call on cabinet:

- a. To work with other local authorities in London to jointly campaign against these proposals that would make it harder to get developers to reduce the expected carbon emissions of their planned developments.

Note: If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

5. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH McCALLUM (Seconded by Councillor David Noakes)

Save our Legal Advice Services

1. Council assembly notes that:
 - a. Cuts to legal aid, the introduction of Universal Credit and the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union have left many of Southwark's most vulnerable residents in desperate need of independent legal advice and support;
 - b. The council funds both generalist and specialist legal advice services for residents through Southwark Law and Citizens' Advice Southwark;
 - c. The 2020/21 Policy and Resources Strategy, approved by council assembly on 26th February 2020, contained proposals for a cut of £83,000 to these advice services, on top of a cut of £82,000 in 2019/20;
 - d. The procurement process for these advice services has not yet been concluded;
 - e. The council is currently seeking, through the procurement process, to introduce measures which prevent providers of legal advice services from using council funding to support legal challenges to the council.
2. Council assembly believes that:
 - a. The legal advice services funded by the council are a vital lifeline to many in our borough;
 - b. Appropriate and timely access to legal advice and support for all who need it has the dual effect of supporting the wellbeing of Southwark residents and reducing the demand on public services in the longer term;
 - c. Providers of independent legal advice must be free to act in the best interest of their clients without being constrained by their funding arrangements;
 - d. It is not appropriate for the council to use its role as a commissioner to prevent vulnerable people having recourse to the courts in situations where it may have acted unlawfully;
 - e. These restrictions mean that the council is in danger of failing to appropriately carry out its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.
3. Council assembly therefore calls upon cabinet to:
 - a. Halt the current procurement process for legal advice services;
 - b. Request that the overview and scrutiny committee establish an extraordinary scrutiny commission to examine the procurement process, review the provision of legal advice services across the borough and make recommendations to cabinet on how the council should proceed;
 - c. Temporarily extend the current contract for legal advice services on a rolling basis until a new arrangement can be agreed.

Note: If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Member Motions	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Andrew Weir 020 7525 7222

AUDIT TRAIL

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Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
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