

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 23 March 2010	Meeting Name: Executive
Report title:		Southwark Circle: A Brief Update – Scrutiny Review	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the executive considers the comments of the strategic director of health and community services in response to the recommendations of the health and adult care scrutiny sub-committee (as listed in the appended report), and requests a corresponding action plan, according to their acceptance of the officer response.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The council's arrangements to establish Southwark Circle were subject to call-in by the overview and scrutiny committee (OSC) on 18 and 20 May 2009. The main challenge was whether the allocation of £1m in grant funding to finance the project for the first three years was an appropriate and proportionate use of the financial risk reserve.
3. The call-in outcome was that OSC agreed to refer the decision back to the executive member for health and adult care, with three related requests (as listed under section 1.3 of the appended report).
4. The health and adult care sub-committee asked for an update on Southwark Circle at its 20 January 2010 meeting, just over six months after the project start. The resulting report is based solely on the officer briefings considered at that meeting and is not intended as a comprehensive review. The sub-committee identified several issues, however, that it believes warrant comment and the recommendations as listed below.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Comments from the Strategic Director of Health and Community Services

5. The response from the strategic director of health and community services to scrutiny's recommendations is set out below.
6. The Strategic Director of Health and Community Services welcomes this scrutiny report on the early development of Southwark Circle, and the comments made by members of the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee. In response to the recommendations officers will work with Daniel Dickens to extend the regular performance monitoring to include proxy

measures of the financial benefit to Southwark Circle members of accessing support from Circle helpers and, as recommended by Scrutiny members, progress in implementing these recommendations will be reported to members at six monthly intervals. This will provide elected members with regular opportunities to monitor and scrutinise the progress of Southwark Circle and therefore indirectly the work of the steering group. In addition to this the Lead Executive Member for Health and Adult Care already receives regular reports on the development of Southwark Circle. It is therefore proposed that, rather than extend membership of the steering group to elected members, the six monthly reports to Scrutiny can continue to provide the opportunity for members to be more actively involved in influencing the continued development of the organisation.

7. Officers have discussed the recommendations with Daniel Dickens who has indicated his willingness to work with officers to progress these matters. He will continue to visit Community Councils and other existing community networks to promote Southwark Circle membership and to seek other opportunities to publicise the organisation throughout the borough. As part of this Southwark Circle will be participating in the Southwark Silver festival this spring.
8. With regard to the recommendation to extend membership of the steering group to include active Southwark Circle members, Mr Dickens would like to reassure members that Southwark Circle is guided by its community members in virtually every aspect of its activities, from the monthly newsletter and member calendar to daily requests for practical services. Throughout the organisation there is an emphasis on participation, contribution and a continual feedback loop built into the delivery strategy so that members can share their perspectives regularly, as well as in more depth as part of project evaluation. This necessary alignment between members and the organisation's activities was part of the logic behind its design as a membership organisation.
9. Whilst Southwark Circle recognises and shares Council Members' desire to ensure that its members contribute to the strategic direction of the project Mr Dickens respectfully proposes that, as a membership organisation, attendance by individual members at the steering group may not be the most effective way of achieving this. Officers will work with Southwark Circle to ensure that active members of Southwark Circle continue to be involved in the further development of the organisation, and that their views and feedback are taken into account by the steering group. It is further proposed that the six monthly reports to Scrutiny committee will include feedback from Southwark Circle members.

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Circle: A Brief Update - Report of the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee, March 2010

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held at	Contact
Southwark Circle 36 month budget plan (CLOSED paper).	Communities, Law and Governance 160 Tooley St, London SE1 2TZ	Rachael Knight Scrutiny Team 020 7525 7291

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Shelley Burke, Head of Overview and Scrutiny	
Report Author	Rachael Knight, Scrutiny Project Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	1 March 2010	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	-
Finance Director	No	-
Strategic Director of Health and Community Services	Yes	Yes