

Item No. 5.2	Classification: Open	Date: 24 March 2021	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 DAMIAN O'BRIEN (Seconded by Councillor Nick Johnson)

Bringing back Trams to Southwark

1. Council Assembly notes that:
 - a. The Croydon Tramlink has been running for around twenty years and is considered a success. Studies found that 19% of Croydon Tramlink passengers switched from cars, there was £1.5 billion inward investment into the area due to its development and that it is liked by all sections of the community.² This piece of infrastructure took only six years to build at a cost of £200m.
 - b. In the last three years, TfL calculated that a potential Sutton tram extension would cost around £425m and could commence service by the mid-2020s.³ Although this work was paused in July 2020, TfL stated that if “new funding opportunities emerge then the case for taking the scheme forward will be reviewed.”
 - c. Edinburgh City Council plans to expand its own tram infrastructure by 2030. This will form part of its ‘City Mobility Plan’ to deliver a net zero carbon transport system, which was approved in February 2021.
 - d. Greater Manchester’s Metrolink trams produce half as much (54 grams) of carbon emissions per passenger kilometre compared to buses (99 grams) and cars (123 grams) since around 70% of the Metrolink system is powered by green electricity generated by wind, solar, water and the rest from recycled waste sources.⁴
2. Council Assembly also notes that:
 - a. London and Southwark have a long history of trams. Their first appearance on the city’s streets stem back to the 19th century. There were tram routes connecting Waterloo to Dulwich and Walworth to Surrey Quays.
 - b. There has been Southwark cross-party support for trams over the last two decades including pushing for the ‘Cross River Tram’ in the early 2000s.
 - c. Southwark Council’s climate emergency declaration set a target for the borough to become carbon neutral by 2030. The low

² <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmsselect/cmtran/378/378we06.htm>

³ <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/trams/sutton-link/>

⁴ <https://tfgm.com/public-transport/tram/metrolink-and-the-environment>

carbon footprint of trams means they would help Southwark work toward that aim.

3. Council Assembly calls on Cabinet to direct the council to:
 - a. Immediately commence a study into the feasibility and benefits of a pilot tram system in Southwark.
 - b. Investigate routes, like the cycleway 'Southwark Spine,' to ascertain whether they would be suitable for trams and to identify the best site for the pilot.
 - c. Depending on the outcome of the study, lobby to produce an operational pilot tram in Southwark by 2030.

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

2. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR SARAH KING (Seconded by Councillor Victoria Olisa)

International Women's Day

1. Council Assembly notes that:
 - a. 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 action. The theme was 'Women in leadership – achieving an equal future in a Covid-19 world'.
 - b. In Southwark and across the UK, women have been on the frontlines of the Covid-19 response in many ways as care workers, health workers, community activists, as teachers and as leaders. We must celebrate and support their leadership.
 - c. But, Covid-19 has also had a devastating impact on women across the UK. It has exacerbated already shockingly high levels of domestic violence. The economic impact has been incredibly harsh as women are more likely to be in low paid work and to be more reliant on childcare and social care, which have all been affected by the pandemic.
 - d. Nationally, women have also not been adequately represented in decision-making, meaning gendered aspects have been missed.
2. Council Assembly further:

- a. Pays tribute to past and present female pioneers - from politicians to community activists to women working in essential services - across the borough who have fought for greater women's rights and transformed their communities and all those women who have fought over the last year against Coronavirus.
 - 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, lobbying to make misogyny a hate crime, the Women's Safety Charter, the Sanctuary scheme, the Ethical Care Charter, investment in services from healthcare and housing to education, and the appointment of a Cabinet Member with specific responsibility for women's rights and a Deputy Cabinet Member for Domestic Abuse.
 - c. Welcomes the commitment in the Annual Workforce Equalities Plan to review and refresh current parental, adoption and carers' leave provisions to ensure they are best practice.
 - d. Welcomes action to advance economic equality, including becoming the first local authority to receive accreditation as a Living Wage Place, asking all our contractors with more than 50 employees to publish their gender pay gap and encouraging all Southwark businesses with more than 50 employees to publish their Black, Asian, minority ethnic, and gender pay gaps.
 - 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. Ensure that a gendered approach to both the Covid-19 response and recovery is taken, ensuring that women's voices and experiences are heard and shape the recovery, and to commit to working with partners to capture disaggregated data.
 - b. Support 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.

- c. Work with Community Southwark to support the establishment of a Southwark Community Women’s Forum.
- d. Take proactive measures to encourage women to stand for elected office and support them when they are elected. This could include:
 - i. Providing all councillors with training on the legal protection available against online and offline abuse and harassment.
 - ii. Supporting local government calls for legislation to permit local councils to retain the option of remote attendance as standard practice for councillors at official council meetings including committee meetings, Council Assembly, officer briefings and committee agenda setting meetings, and putting in place the necessary technology including remote voting. Covid-19 has shown that the use of technology can enable greater participation, especially from women.
- e. Continue to raise awareness and encourage action to tackle violence against women and girls, including working with schools to address sexual harassment, extending the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation to council housing resident services and encouraging other major landlords to also seek accreditation.
- f. Review how to improve and strengthen its work and commitments to promote gender equality as part of the Council’s refreshed Equality Framework.
- g. Ask the Constitutional Steering Panel to review current parental and carers’ leave policies and working practices for councillors.
- h. Ask the Audit, Governance and Standards committee to review the current code of conduct to ensure it adequately addresses gender bias, sexism and discrimination.

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

3. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH MCCALLUM (Seconded by Councillor Anood Al-Samerai)

Commercial Events in Southwark Park

- 1. Council assembly believes that:
 - a. Southwark Park - along with all Metropolitan Open Land, parks and green spaces across the borough - is vitally important for local residents.

- b. Publicly accessible open spaces have become even more critical during the coronavirus pandemic and as a result of the associated lockdowns and restrictions.
 - c. Access to public open spaces is critical for the physical and mental health of local residents.
 - d. Publicly accessible open spaces should not be fenced off for private large-scale commercially ticketed events.
2. Council assembly notes:
- a. The proposals for a commercial MIK K-Pop music festival to be held in Southwark Park in July 2021 that would see:
 - i. between 10,000 – 12,000 attendees per day for two days
 - ii. around one fifth of Southwark Park fenced off to the public
 - iii. up to nine days' closure in total (including the days to build and dismantle the site)
 - iv. local residents unable to access a significant proportion of their park during this time
 - v. ticket prices that are unaffordable for many local residents
 - b. The considerable impact on local residents of the noise, litter, anti-social behaviour and loss of amenity as a result of the proposed K-Pop event.
 - c. The controversy over a similar event (Alice in Winterland) that occurred in Southwark Park in 2018/19.
 - d. That other commercial events elsewhere in the borough are similarly encroaching on public use of parks and open spaces.
 - e. The relatively small financial benefit to the council of commercial events on this scale.
3. Council assembly therefore resolves:
- a. That it does not support the use of Southwark Park and other public open spaces for private commercial ticketed events.
 - b. To call on Cabinet to reject the proposal for the MIK K-Pop Music Festival.
 - c. To call on Cabinet to amend the Outdoor Events Policy to prohibit all such events in Southwark's parks in the future.

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

4. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS (Seconded by Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle)

The Union Learning Fund

1. Council Assembly notes that:
 - a. On Tuesday 6 October, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) received a letter from the Department for Education saying that ministers have decided to end the Union Learning Fund from March 2021.
 - b. The Union Learning Fund (ULF) was set up in 1998 under the last Labour Government to support trade unions to widen access to learning and training in workplaces for both union members and non-members. The fund supports workplace projects across England, and is coordinated by the TUC.
 - c. Each year around 200,000 workers are supported into learning or training with union support through the ULF and the TUC, including many Southwark residents via their workplaces. These learners undertake all sorts of job-relevant learning and training, including basic literacy and numeracy, ICT skills, apprenticeships and traineeships, vocational training, continuing professional development and many other informal and formal courses.
 - d. In 2019–20, the ULF was worth £12m. If upheld, this decision will effectively end union-brokered skills training, and will undermine key government skills and retraining priorities at a crucial moment for our economy.
2. Council Assembly understands that:
 - a. Union learning reaches people that other Department for Education programmes do not reach.
 - b. There is an independent evaluation of the Union Learning Fund every two years. It was most recently evaluated by the University of Exeter in 2018. They spoke to 2,459 learners, and found:
 - i. Over two-thirds (68 per cent) of learners with no previous qualifications got a qualification.
 - ii. 47 per cent of those with entry level or level 1 qualifications got a qualification at a higher level.
 - iii. Four in five (80 per cent) said they had developed skills that they could transfer to a new job.
 - iv. Two in three (62 per cent) said their new skills made them more effective in their current job.

- v. One in five (19 per cent) said they had been promoted or given increased responsibility and one in 10 (11 per cent) got a pay rise.
- c. The 2018 independent evaluation found that union learning provided excellent value for money:
- i. For every £1 spent on the Union Learning Fund, there is a return of £12.30: £7.60 to the worker, £4.70 to the employer.
 - ii. The Union Learning Fund delivers an estimated net contribution to the economy of more than £1.4bn as a result of a boost to jobs, wages and productivity.
 - iii. The return to the exchequer (through reduced spending on welfare benefits and other factors resulting from the boost to jobs and wages) is £3.57 for each £1 spent on the Union Learning Fund.
 - iv. The £12m government funding levered in an additional £54m from employers, unions and training providers in 2019–20.
- d. The government has said it will put reskilling workers at the heart of its economic recovery plans after the pandemic. In September 2020, the government announced a new fully funded entitlement to achieve a first level 3 qualification, delivered through the National Skills Fund. Union learning is ideally placed to support this aspiration, in the following ways:
- i. directly, through delivering relevant level 3 courses to workplace learners, which is already a core function of the Union Learning Fund and was assessed as highly effective by the 2018 independent evaluation;
 - ii. directly, through enabling those with basic skills to learn and develop, putting them in a position to progress to level 3 skills.
- e. Successive governments of all parties have valued this role – and have supported the Union Learning Fund. As government funding, it is paid as a contract and is subject to stringent monitoring requirements. Union Learning Fund money can only be spent on the direct costs of getting working people into learning and skills training, and the associated costs of delivering this programme.
- f. ULF projects adapted quickly to delivering online learning and training for workers during the pandemic and have actually surpassed the number of outcomes expected by government since the beginning of April.
3. Council Assembly therefore resolves to:

- a. Express its public support for the continuation of the Union Learning Fund.
- b. Raise this issue with our local MPs and encourage them to call on the Government to reverse its decision.

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

5. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES McASH (Seconded by Councillor Renata Hamvas)

Sustainable future funding for Local Welfare Assistance

1. This Council notes that:
 - a. Until 2013, emergency financial assistance was principally provided by central government, through the Discretionary Social Fund.
 - b. From 2013, the government implemented wholesale reform of the Discretionary Social Fund. Some parts were kept, however, the coalition government abolished Crisis Loans (other than Alignment Payments) and Community Care Grants.
 - c. Responsibility for *emergency financial assistance* was devolved to the local level and funding transferred to local authorities in England on a non-ring-fenced basis, with the intention that they establish their own Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) Schemes to support local people facing a crisis.
 - d. The Government then decided that from 2015/16 onwards there would be no separate LWA funding stream. Instead, it would become part of the general Revenue Support Grant that central government provides to councils to support their spending on any local services.
 - e. In the intervening years, with reduced overall funding for councils, a lack of guidance from central government, and the absence of a statutory requirement for local authorities to deliver emergency financial assistance, local authorities faced difficult decisions about funding and maintaining LWA schemes. In many areas, local welfare provision was either significantly reduced or closed completely.
 - f. Despite this, Southwark Council has retained its own LWA schemes (Southwark Emergency Support Scheme, or SESS, and a separate Hardship Fund).

- g. In 2020/21, in response to significant levels of need during the COVID-19 pandemic, Government provided additional funding to English local authorities to deliver emergency financial assistance. £63million was provided through the Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for food and essential items, whilst a further £170million was provided through the COVID Winter Support Grant. Southwark Council received £1.5m in total.
 - h. This funding, whilst welcome, has had to cover a wide range of needs beyond just LWA, including provision through our Community Hub, community grants to support food security and the provision of free school meals during school holidays. The Council will have spent significantly more responding to COVID and providing emergency support with food and other essentials than it has received from government.
 - i. The Council has since April 2020 provided 4,553 individuals and families with support through the emergency support scheme not including the additional support through the community hub or free school meals, totalling £1.45m.
2. This Council believes that:
- a. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impacts, we can expect there to be significant ongoing need for emergency financial assistance, with many Southwark households, including many families with children, likely to face a 'financial crisis' point – a financial problem which puts the immediate health and wellbeing of family members at risk.
 - b. Adequately resourced, local authorities are uniquely well placed to support residents facing financial crisis, with LWA schemes central to that support. Run well, LWA schemes draw on the existing knowledge that councils have of need in their communities, alongside the relationships they hold with local voluntary and community sector partners. The experience of the pandemic has clearly demonstrated the value of the Council's scheme – providing emergency short term support with the cost of essentials for thousands of households that were already vulnerable before experiencing a financial shock due to sudden loss, or interruption to income.
 - c. Whilst local authorities have other mechanisms such as Discretionary Housing Payments and Local Council Tax Support Schemes to support low income households, Covid-19 has demonstrated how important it is for councils to have the capacity to deliver timely and discretionary emergency support to households reaching crisis point.

- d. Central government should therefore provide sustainable, long-term funding for local welfare assistance- to give councils the confidence and certainty that they need to develop an effective local welfare offer.
3. This Council, therefore, resolves:
- a. To maintain its Local Welfare Assistance Scheme, including both SESS and the Hardship Fund, to support residents facing financial crisis.
- b. To use effective communications and engagement to increase awareness of these schemes and to train voluntary sector organisations to support resident referrals.
- c. To campaign for permanent restoration of a central government funding allocation to meet costs of Local Welfare Assistance schemes from 2021/22, and for that funding to be protected in real terms over the following years.
- d. To write to the Chancellor, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to request that they make such a funding allocation available to local authorities.

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	Virginia Wynn-Jones 020 7525 7222

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
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