

## **COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**

**24 MARCH 2021**

### **RESPONSES TO MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR MARGY NEWENS**

This has been a difficult year for employment support – both in terms of the vast number of people who became unemployed in Southwark, and the impact of Covid-19 and social distancing on the council's face to face employment services. In light of this, how many unemployed residents have been helped into good quality work since the local elections in 2018?

#### **RESPONSE**

Since April 2018, the council has supported 3,390 residents into work and created an additional 1,453 apprenticeships, through a range of programmes.

A very large proportion of these employment outcomes (over 60%) are delivered through Southwark Works, the council's commissioned employment support service, and our s106 programme.

As part of the council's approach to economic renewal in response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the council has reviewed the Southwark Works offer to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our residents, particularly for those furthest from work and in most need of support.

Building on learning from previous years, Southwark Works will have an even greater focus on effective outreach and engagement, support for vulnerable young people including care leavers (through the New Youth Deal), effective employer engagement to secure a wide range of good quality employment opportunities for local people, and delivery of apprenticeships and in-work progression support.

In addition, and in response to the impact of the pandemic on young people, our new Youth Opportunities Campaign seeks to direct young residents to the wealth of local provision that can help them in their journey to work, training, learning or volunteering. The campaign consists of dedicated webpages, and a regular e-newsletter publicising opportunities to a mailing list of over 1000 subscribers (and growing).

As the pandemic eases and businesses are in a position to think about future recruitment, the campaign will look at innovative ways to ensure our young people are considered for emerging opportunities and they have the information they need to make informed choices about their career options.

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR HUMAIRA ALI**

Residents of Rouel Road estate, Perronet House plus several other estates have experienced loss of heating and hot water over one of the most brutally cold winters in recent times. Not only was the council response slow with poor communication, many families saw dramatic increases in heating bills. The final insult is the council has still not paid out any compensation or even made the compensation package available. Can the Leader confirm that not only will all residents be compensated for the inconvenience but all direct and indirect additional costs incurred by residents will be recompensed? Can the Leader also provide the timescale in which this will happen for each development?

**RESPONSE**

First let me express my sympathy and apologies to everyone affected by the loss of heating and hot water. Everyone living in one of our properties should have consistent access to these most basic of amenities. This is why we introduced the warm, dry, safe programme, when we first came to run the council and we will continue to do our utmost to ensure that this sort of disruption is prevented.

Residents affected by loss of heating and hot water will be compensated for inconvenience and for direct and indirect costs. Compensation for residents on the Rouel Road estate is currently being processed by the council's major works team and should be resolved by the end of April.

The loss of heating and hot water for residents in Perronet House has been less significant, although I know it will have been felt acutely by those who were affected and to those residents I must again express sympathy and my apologies.

Every loss of heating and hot water, especially during winter months, is regrettable. Council officers and contractors work hard to avoid any loss of service and the council is truly sorry when this occurs. However, the level of service failure in Perronet House has not been at a level that triggers compensation payments. In the past year, there were four outages, lasting an average of four hours and 45 minutes. The longest outage was eight hours. To deal with this issue in the short-term, heating and hot water is currently being powered by temporary boilers, prior to a new flue being installed.

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU**

Can the Cabinet Member confirm how much Covid Support Grants have been paid out to Southwark Businesses and what proportion of the amount went to small and medium enterprises (SMEs)?

## **RESPONSE**

In total, Southwark Council has awarded £101,970,000 to date in Covid-19 related business support grants since the start of the pandemic. This has been in the form of over 16,000 individual grant awards.

Of the grant award total, £92.4m was awarded through the various business rates schemes. Due to the criteria set by government of allocating these grants, it is not possible to say which proportion went to SMEs.

However, £9.5m has been awarded across 2,315 grants through the various discretionary grant schemes that have also been made available. 100% of these discretionary grants were made available to small and medium enterprises with up to 50 employees through the criteria established by the council for these funds.

This includes the £2m dedicated Southwark Business Hardship fund that was launched in April 2020. Funded directly by the council, Southwark was one of only two London boroughs to make available financial assistance to small businesses before the government discretionary grant schemes were announced.

#### **4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR WILLIAM HOUNGBO**

Can the Leader provide insight as to why residents of Devon Mansions are being charged for heat alarms given a significant number of factors which mean that residents should not be charged? These include but are not limited to:

1. London Borough of Southwark's public statements in response to the Coroner's recommendations post Lakanal regarding installation of free heat alarms to be rolled out across all Southwark dwellings;
2. London Borough of Southwark's own legal advice states that leaseholders cannot be expected to pay for this;
3. Installation starting without expert advice and then no consultation with residents regarding installation or maintenance. No section 20 notices being issued for this work in spite 10 years of escalations and complaints since 2010 since the last one was decommissioned;
4. Subsequently the expert advice suggests heat alarms inappropriate for inside flats and London Fire Brigade (LFB) advice that they are not suitable for hallways;
5. Furthermore the installations were in the incorrect locations and fitted into 20 year old cracks and a broader state of disrepair.

## **RESPONSE**

1. London Borough of Southwark's public statements in response to the Coroner's recommendations post Lakanal regarding installation of free heat alarms to be rolled out across all Southwark dwellings;

The Lakanal enquiry recommended that fire alarms be offered free of charge to leaseholders as a way of maximising take-up of the voluntary installation. These free individual alarms were installed in 96% of leaseholders' homes in Devon Mansions in 2014/15. They provide a vital alarm for individual households that have them fitted.

The new building wide fire alarm system that is now being installed in Devon Mansions is mandatory for the safety of residents in the buildings owing to the construction of the building. This new system is a significant additional safety feature for the buildings and goes considerably beyond the individual fire alarms that have already been provided free of charge.

2. London Borough of Southwark's own legal advice states that leaseholders cannot be expected to pay for this;

Whilst the lease does not expressly refer to a fire alarm installation, it is sufficient under the terms of the lease that the work is required for the maintenance of the block. To support this the council can refer to a first tier tribunal (FFT) ruling, which states that restricting the exceptions to double glazed windows and an entry phone system is an unduly narrow interpretation of the wording of the lease. The ruling also points to paragraph 7(6) of Part I of the Third Schedule which also allows the recovery of the cost of "The maintenance and management of the building and the estate...", stating that the term permits the recovery of costs of work that might be neither a repair nor an improvement. This considered view has been reviewed by the council's full complaints process and further disagreement would need to be raised with the first tier tribunal.

3. Installation starting without expert advice and then no consultation with residents regarding installation or maintenance. No section 20 notices being issued for this work in spite 10 years of escalations and complaints since 2010 since the last one was decommissioned;

Expert advice was provided by the council's qualified fire safety surveyor, with 15 years' experience previously gained in the London Fire Brigade (LFB) both as an operational firefighter and as an inspecting officer. All blocks at Devon Mansions were visited, along with Hartland House, and the issues were found to be generic across all 21 Devon Mansions blocks, which is shown in the email included in the Deputation: "Summary; Devon Mansions; focused on blocks 1-2 but noted to be a generic condition re. all cores".

This email was sent to the fire safety manager and senior fire safety surveyor to alert them to the findings of the visits to the blocks. The fire safety surveyor also consulted with our compliance manager (electrical) and the system designer at Spokemead. The interim measures (which are on the second page of the email in section 3 of the deputation) were quantified by an independent fire engineer who was being consulted in relation to EWS1. The heat alarms are an integral part of the communal alarm system, which is installed as suggested by the local authority co-ordinators of regulatory services (Lacors) guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing and in line BS 5839 Part 6, Grade A LD2.

The council carried out s20 consultations for schemes notified in 2006, 2012, and those currently underway. In 2006, the works were to the roof, roof escape and fire alarms. In 2012, fire safety works were carried out and there are two current schemes being carried out, for the council's quality homes improvement programme (QHIP) and fire alarms.

Legislation allows the council to begin undertaking works before the end of the observation period, if the work in question is deemed both urgent and necessary. In this case, the council deemed these works urgent owing to the construction of the building and the need to provide early warning to all residents in the affected part of the block to allow them to evacuate as quickly as possible. The council used a term contractor, which had previously been consulted on, with set rates, and carried out a full s20. The council's view is that this is consistent with the requirements of the legislation, but in the event that an FTT would find it in breach then dispensation would be granted upon request in accordance with case law set by the Supreme Court.

4. Subsequently the expert advice suggests heat alarms inappropriate for inside flats and London Fire Brigade (LFB) advice that they are not suitable for hallways;

The system was designed in line with BS 5839 Part 6 Grade A LD2 and the suggestions in Lacors. The heat alarm is placed behind the flat entrance door in order to provide early warning of a confirmed fire within the affected flat to other building residents, therefore allowing those residents to evacuate as quickly as possible. The heat alarm is not a stand-alone unit – it is an integral part of the communal system. The LFB advice relates to individual flat detection and not a communal system.

5. Furthermore the installations were in the incorrect locations and fitted into 20 year old cracks and a broader state of disrepair.

The system was designed in line with BS 5839 Part 6 Grade A LD2 and the suggestions in Lacors. The heat alarm is placed behind the flat entrance door in order to provide early warning of a confirmed fire within the affected flat to other building residents, therefore allowing those residents to evacuate as quickly as possible.

The Senior Electrical Engineer inspecting these works has not seen any installations installed 'fitted into 20 year-old cracks'. The communal ceiling areas are rather congested and undoubtedly conduits will traverse cracks but will be affixed securely. We would be grateful if the exact locations could be pointed out to us and we will make further inspection of those areas.

**5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LEEMING**

Southwark's town centres have been under increasing pressure in recent times as a result of the continued move to internet shopping and increases in rent

and business rates. What support is the council offering to help keep our shopping centres vibrant?

## **RESPONSE**

The provision of financial assistance to help business deal with the immediate impact of Covid-19 has been critical to supporting our high street businesses and ensuring improved prospects for the longer-term vibrancy of our town centres and high streets. Since March 2020, the council has issued business grants in excess of £100m to help Southwark businesses survive the immediate impact of the pandemic and through various periods of lockdown.

As part of our longer-term response to the economic challenges brought by the Covid-19 crisis, we have developed a borough-wide Economic Renewal Plan (ERP), which sets out our priorities and includes High Streets and Town Centres as one of its main themes. As part of this work, we are also developing a dedicated cross-council Town Centres and High Streets Framework that will inform the broader ERP.

Through this framework, we will outline how we will deliver on our Council Plan commitment to “Help Southwark’s high streets to be thriving and vibrant, seeking to achieve full occupancy and encourage residents to shop local”. The framework will set out the council’s vision and ambition for our town centres and high streets capture the broad range of activity that is already happening, and help set out priorities for action working across the council and in partnership with our key stakeholders.

The framework will align with all other council plans and strategies with relevance to town centres, high streets and neighbourhoods, and it will ensure that vital lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic help to shape our future approaches.

Aligned to “Southwark Stands Together”, it will also highlight the diversity of each town centre and the local communities within it, and ensure that we celebrate and enhance the distinctive identity of each locality within our borough.

## **6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAMIAN O’BRIEN**

In regards to the cladding and snagging scandal in Southwark and the council’s planned response via the Housing Safety Board and budget 2021-22 commitments, please could the Leader detail how many Private and Housing Associations Residents Associations are now gaining support from the council? Also, how many such associations he plans to contact to provide support and by when?

## **RESPONSE**

Southwark Council have set up a Building Safety website providing key information relating to cladding, external wall fire review form ESW1 and wider

fire updates. The website also gives landlords, leaseholders and residents of Southwark the opportunity to raise any queries surrounding fire safety. The inbox address is [buildingsafety@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:buildingsafety@southwark.gov.uk)

To date we have had a mixture of enquiries, mainly about ESW1 forms and requests for clarification on whether blocks above six storeys have any aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding. Our records do not identify that any enquiries have come from private and housing associations residents associations, rather they have been from individual residents.

The Council has also set up a Building Safety Board to address the wider safety in the borough and facilitate any key decisions required. The board is chaired by the strategic director of housing and modernisations and includes the London Fire Brigade (LFB) borough commander, other senior LFB representatives, senior council officers (including the council's Fire Safety Enforcement team) and a representative from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

The council has also set up weekly meetings with the MHCLG for updates and to share information from our residents. This also includes supporting the MHCLG with information collated around high-rise blocks owned by Housing Associations.

We are also in discussion with Housing Associations about possible enforcement, where they are leasing residential space and their landlord is not engaged in the process of remediation.

**7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR VICTOR CHAMBERLAIN**

Please could the Leader detail by council owned estate over the past 5 years the number of incidents and total hours per year of district heating outages and the maximum outage time per estate? Please could the Leader also indicate the age of these district heating systems for each estate and where they are using temporary systems?

**RESPONSE**

I know every single hour of heating loss has a significant impact on our residents. We are continuing to make year on year improvements to our heating systems. In recent years we have reduced outages by around 60%.

Across the borough of Southwark, we have 95 estates with district heating systems. It will take the department a significant amount of time to gather and collate the full breadth of the information that you have requested, so I have outlined an overview of the situation with some background.

Since Labour was elected in 2010, we have undertaken significant works to reverse the damage done by years of neglect to our council housing, overseen by the previous Liberal Democrat and Conservative council leadership.

In 2010, when we made a commitment to make every home warm, dry and safe, we have invested in and significantly improved the quality of our council housing that previously did not meet basic standard. We have achieved this while plugging the £600m hole in the housing budget that we inherited from the Liberal Democrat and Conservative run council.

The age of our boilers range, but of the 97 boilers, the oldest is from the 1960s. In addition to these boilers we are currently using temporary boilers at twelve locations across the borough at the following locations: Aylesbury estate, Wendover, Latimer, Gayhurst, Missenden, Taplow, Gaywood (Perronet House), Castlemead, Dighton Court North Peckham, Sceaux Gardens, and Ledbury estates.

**8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID NOAKES**

Please could the Leader list by year since and including 2016 how many EU citizens living in Southwark are registered to vote? Please could the Leader further confirm how many of the circa 47,000 EU citizens living in Southwark are eligible to vote and how many are now actually registered to do so?

**RESPONSE**

The number of EU citizens as at 1 March 2021 on the register of electors is 25,880.

<b>Year register published</b>	<b>EU citizens</b>
2016	21,571
2017	20,971
2018	24,152
2019	26,279
2020	25,980
2021 (March)	25,880

**9. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR LEANNE WERNER**

Can the Cabinet Member confirm how much the council has reduced its emissions since 2010, and whether it is on track to reach its target of halving emissions by 2022?

**RESPONSE**

The council is committed to reducing its carbon emissions and being carbon neutral by 2030.

In the 2018 council plan the council had a commitment to halve its emissions from its operations by 2022 from the 2008 baseline. From 2010 to 2018 we had already made progress, and I am pleased to announce that we have now met this commitment.



The council has reduced its carbon emissions on its operational stock by 62.79%, nearly two thirds, since 2010.

However, while this is fantastic progress, there is more that we need to do. The council will shortly be publishing a Southwark Climate Emergency Action Plan and will be making further commitments to reduce our own carbon emissions.

**10. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR CLEO SOANES**

A key commitment from Southwark Stands Together is supporting our diverse communities through regeneration processes. Can the Cabinet Member tell us how the council has increased representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) architects and planners, in order to reflect the demographics of areas being regenerated?

**RESPONSE**

I would like to thank Councillor Soanes for the question and I'm pleased to explain the key steps that Southwark has taken in the past year to improve representation of BAME architects and planners to provide important leadership.

The Council is committed to improving the lives of all its residents and is passionate in its belief that planning, architecture and design excellence is central to achieving distinctive places, homes, buildings, and public realm that people can relate to and identify with. This is a key element of the Southwark Stands Together initiative

The ambitious new architects' framework launched in 2020, in partnership with LHC (London Housing Consortium), has found some of the best architects and designers in the UK and Europe, including small emerging practices, to deliver civic design. This framework has already begun to nurture a new generation of designers to start working for Southwark and other London councils,

However, following discussion last summer, it became evident that Southwark needed to go much further to provide a framework which offers a representative and comprehensive panel of architects who come with a range of ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds and experience that reflects London's communities.

I am pleased to confirm that we launched a new procurement in December 2020 to appoint up to 20 of the very best established and emerging practices, including Black-led and BAME-led practices.

It is expected that the new expanded framework will commence late summer/early autumn 2021 and will be drawn upon for anticipated Council-led developments in the borough. Planned and future projects include strategic

regeneration schemes and projects across all sectors: new homes, education, commercial and mixed use developments.

The Architects' Framework is a small part of our actions to improve representation for architects. In the shorter term, the council continues to pursue initiatives to improve representation of BAME architects. This includes employing architects for smaller scale projects and encouraging balanced and mutually beneficial collaborations with both larger and smaller practices involving our communities in the procurement of architects. The appointment of Spheron Architects to lead on the Southwark Stands Together Peckham Square development is an important example.

The Council has also taken action to increase the representation of BAME architects and planners in the Planning and Regeneration Divisions and reflect the diversity of the borough.

Action has been taken particularly over the last 5 years to increase the diversity of staff in the Planning Division. This has been achieved with two thirds of staff at planner, graduate and apprentice level being women and/or from BAME backgrounds. We now have seven architects in house, the majority of whom are black women.

Planning and Regeneration have also sponsored a local resident to be a Southwark Scholar training to be planner.

Southwark is one of the pioneers in having its own Design Review Panel (DRP) – a group of industry experts who provide a critical voice to help achieve excellence in most of the strategic developments in the borough. In November last year we invited additional expressions of interest to the Design Review Panel in order to ensure that it better reflects the borough's communities. In December, we received over 45 expressions of interest from highly qualified and capable architects, landscape architects and urban designers.

From those expressions of interest, we were able to offer places to 15 new DRP members. All the candidates will contribute to our drive to increase the diversity of our Panel.

**11. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE**

What percentage of the 17% estimated total emissions in Southwark by the council are a result of its fossil fuel usage? Can the Cabinet Member confirm that 100% of its circa £10million per annum gas fuels consumed on all council buildings including all council estates will be green energy by the end of this year? And is the circa £5million a year in electricity usage now already 100% green energy? If not, when will it be?

**RESPONSE**

The council's commitment to reducing its carbon emissions and being carbon neutral by 2030 is unwavering. Achieving this is a top priority for the all of us here in Southwark.

I am very proud to say that the council has already reduced its carbon emissions from its operational stock by nearly two thirds since 2010. We have recently moved all our operational electricity to renewable, and plan to move estates and schools to renewable as soon as the contract is available for renewal in 2022.

Our operational stock (offices, street lighting etc.) account for 11% of council emissions. All of our operational estate electricity is now from the 100% REGO backed green tariff for electricity. Moving to green gas would cost approximately an additional £70,000; we are committed to making the change to green gas as soon as it becomes contractually possible.

In addition to this commitment, the council has recently been successful in securing government funding to make improvements on our own operational estate to reduce our reliance on gas for heating. Work is underway to make further improvements, which will all help us reach our aim of reducing our carbon emissions and becoming a carbon neutral borough.

We have a bigger challenge due to our position as the largest local authority-housing provider in London. Our housing stock is a huge asset to the borough, we are aware that decarbonisation of this asset poses a challenge. It is nonetheless a challenge that we are committed to addressing.

We are making significant headway in reducing the emissions from our housing stock, with the aim of mirroring the success we have made with our operational estate. As mentioned, we will be moving to green electricity as soon as contractually possible. We are also pursuing other ways of carbon reduction, including the current water source heat pumps project (11% reduction), the projected SELCHP expansion (cumulative 31% reduction), the further roll-out of heat pumps (cumulative 68% reduction), and an extensive fabric energy efficiency programme (cumulative 82% reduction).

At present, many of our estates receive their heating and hot water from gas boilers. If we carried out the move to green gas by the end of the year, under current guidelines the cost of the change would need to be passed on to residents through service charges.

It would not be in line with our commitment to a just transition or right for us to impose such a cost on those living in properties managed by the council. I will shortly be writing to the Government, outlining the support they need to provide in order to facilitate the conversion of our housing estates to green gas. The Government must be prepared to make the financial commitments to allow local authorities to carry out the work that will mean we reach our goal of carbon neutrality and secure a greener future for generations to come.

**12. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR HAMISH McCALLUM**

Please could the Cabinet Member advise whether the Bakerloo Line Extension will be built by 2030? If not, by when? And how does this impact the council's plan to build 5,000 council homes in the Old Kent Road area? Does he agree the Council's Movement Plan is flawed without the building of the extension?

## **RESPONSE**

Southwark and Lewisham councils have been campaigning for the Bakerloo line extension for a number of years, both to improve transport in our boroughs and to help build much-needed new homes.

You will be aware that TfL's finances have come under considerable pressure as a result of Covid-19 and that they have had to seek funding from Government in order to carry on operating London's transport network.

Despite this I can confirm that the safeguarding for the Bakerloo Line Extension has been issued earlier this month by the Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, and that the Bakerloo Line Extension project (unlike Crossrail 2) forms part of TfL's funding bid to government contained in its Financial Sustainability Plan. These are very positive signs of the projects continued support from both central government and the Mayor.

We are currently working with TfL to refresh the business case for the Bakerloo Line Extension, which remains very strong. Not least because of our proactive and plan lead approach to development and regeneration in the Old Kent Road area.

We have since April 2018 granted consents for over 8,000 homes in the Old Kent Road, of which about 38% will be genuinely affordable, which is a remarkable achievement. At present despite the impacts of Covid-19 on the construction industry, there are just over 700 homes under construction, and this will increase to over 1,000 by the summer of this year. This is part of our commitment on the Old Kent Road to build 5,000 new social homes.

The council's ability to not only plan for but also to secure delivery ensures the credibility of the Bakerloo Line Extension business case. This is demonstrably not just a paper exercise but also one that is delivering much needed housing for our residents.

The council has anticipated through its phasing plan for the Old Kent Road and its Movement Plan that only 9,500 homes can be built before the construction of the Bakerloo Line Extension is confirmed.

In addition to the Bakerloo Line Extension, the council is securing money from developers for enhanced bus services. We are also making significant improvement in cycling infrastructure for the Old Kent Road including a planned 4km of new segregated cycle lanes. Planning permission has also been granted for spaces to store 8,500 bikes. This infrastructure will complement the Bakerloo Line and support the growth in population within the phase 1

developments. This will ensure the transport needs of the existing and new residents are fully met.

**13. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ADELE MORRIS**

As the Council has declared a Climate Emergency 2 years ago, what steps is the planning department taking to ensure that new developments – including the council's own developments – are meeting the highest environmental standards of carbon neutral or better? At what point can we expect developments not to need to make payments into a carbon offset fund, noting these may be spent miles away from the polluting development?

**RESPONSE**

Right from the outset of the development of the New Southwark Plan (NSP), the council committed to reducing carbon emissions by introducing requirements for developments to meet the highest environmental standards so that they will be net carbon zero. This means that they will not emit any additional carbon. Since then the Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to an early amendment to the NSP focussed on the Climate Emergency.

The NSP has been updated at the Examination in Public in March 2021 to introduce stronger requirements for adapting developments and making sure that they do not create carbon to pollute the environment. Within this update, we have created the Southwark Green New Deal, which aims to deliver 1000 new green jobs by 2022. The council has also introduced a commitment to carbon neutrality within the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan.

We have also introduced an assessment on Whole Lifecycle Carbon emissions, those carbon emissions resulting from the construction and the use of a building over its entire life, including its demolition and disposal. Whole Lifecycle carbon considers operational, embodied carbon and post end of life emissions. The Whole Lifecycle Carbon Assessment is submitted at pre-application, submission and post-construction stages.

The purpose of this assessment is to achieve resource efficiency and cost savings by encouraging the re-use of existing materials instead of new materials and the retrofit and retention of existing structures and fabric over new construction.

The Council's priority is for all new development to be net carbon zero onsite. All major developments can reduce the carbon produced by one to two thirds. The remainder will be made up by payments to make up for any carbon produced because the technology is not available.

In line with the council's commitment to ensure a greater share of Carbon savings are made on-site, the Council has increased the charge for developments not meeting the requirement on site by 50%. This Carbon Offset fund collects payment of £95 per tonne for residential and commercial

development. This was increased from £60 in November 2020. The first set of spending priorities for these projects to reduce carbon emissions will be decided at Cabinet in June 2021 based on the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

**14. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR SUNNY LAMBE**

The pandemic has had a profound impact on people receiving social care in Southwark, particularly those in care homes. What work has the council done to support these residents?

**RESPONSE**

The council has worked closely with care home providers to support residents and their families by keeping the residents and the staff in the care homes safe. The workforce has continued to deliver care during a very difficult time for those on the frontline of health and care.

We kept in regular contact with the care homes; initially calling daily and then weekly and now meeting fortnightly to ensure that we are aware of any challenges that they experience in delivering safe care.

Southwark has 17 care homes operating in the borough and at the beginning of the pandemic when there were shortages of PPE, we provided mutual aid. To date we have provided over 108,000 units to the 12 care homes that needed it.

With the collaboration of the CCG, we supported staff to access testing before the government provided direct access to regular testing. We ensured that the money allocated by government, just over £2.5 million, for managing infection control and testing was passported to them.

The visiting of residents has been the biggest challenge for care homes and they have worked hard to ensure that visits take place in the circumstances of a resident's end of life or other compassionate grounds. So, I'm pleased to share that a local developer is working with officers to build, at their own cost additional space in these homes so that visiting outdoors can take place for those family members who are not nominated as a visitor who can enter the premises and hold their loved one's hand.

Finally, vaccination is the way for society generally and care homes in particular to be able to restore social contact. The vaccination programme of care homes started before Christmas and care homes visits are taking place this week (week commencing 23 March 2021) for their second doses. The GPs visiting these homes are working closely with officers to promote taking the vaccine. Over 85% of residents have chosen to take it and over 55% of staff have taken it.

We are doing everything that we can to increase take up, so it is important to say that 'a no now, is not a no forever', so those who are reluctant to take the vaccine are encouraged to speak with clinicians that they trust, and look at reliable sources of information. I would encourage them to think about how the vaccine will reduce the likelihood them of catching this deadly disease and reduce the impact of the symptoms if they do catch it.

**15. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR CHARLIE SMITH**

Sadly the national housing crisis means that there is a quarter of a million households in temporary accommodation across the UK. Southwark has an existing commitment not to use Bed & Breakfast accommodation for families - what other steps is the council taking to improve the quality of temporary accommodation for these residents?

**RESPONSE**

In response to the national housing crisis mentioned and how we are improving the quality of our temporary accommodation, we have responded by making an increased investment of £4m into temporary accommodation this year coming.

This investment will also help fulfil our commitment to a 'Good Homes Standard' for Temporary Accommodation, which was agreed at Cabinet on 9 March 2021.

We already have a standard which applies to council stock, but this will ensure that those in temporary accommodation (either leased or in the private rented sector), can enjoy greater tenure security, have assurances around health & safety requirements, and can have a property with basic white goods (fridge and cooker) as well as floor coverings, when they move in.

**16. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR VIKKI MILLS**

Family Early Help staff and Health Visitors have obviously been working around the clock during the pandemic and we should recognise the amazing work they have done. However, services and support for children under 5 were under pressure prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and this pressure has grown. More families have been tipped into vulnerability and there have been increases in domestic abuse and perinatal mental illness. At the same time, there has been a big decrease in face-to-face contact, with only 1 in 10 parents of a child under 2 saying they had seen a Health Visitor face-to-face during lockdown (nationally). What planning is taking place to ensure Health Visitors caseloads are manageable as we emerge from lockdown so that no child or mother can fall through a gap and what is the current timetable for the urgent reopening of Children's Centres with full programmes of face-to-face support once government guidelines permit?

**RESPONSE**

Throughout the pandemic, health visiting has prioritised seeing families face-to-face, be that virtually or in person. Uniquely, Southwark has maintained a face-to-face offer for all families, including those classed in the universal tier: for example, all new birth visits involved an in-person visit either in the home or in a health care setting. It was recognised early on that the most effective way to identify changes in need is by having eyes on a family.



Southwark has always had a dynamic under 5s population, with high levels of need. Our health visiting service remains agile to the vulnerabilities of local families and those coming into our borough. We have emerged from three lockdowns to date and health visiting has appropriately flexed their service on each occasion to support as required. Health visiting maintains strong links with partners in health and social care to ensure that, when an additional need is identified, families are referred for appropriate support. Southwark's Under 5s Strategic Partnership Board, which is attended by GSTT and commissioners, regularly discusses capacity and service offers during Covid-19 so that each partner is up-to-date with the 0-5 landscape. As a board, we have begun planning for emerging needs and how we might explore working differently to support this.

Both provider and commissioner recognise the growing needs and vulnerabilities in the 0-5 cohort, both as a direct and indirect cause of the Covid-19 pandemic. We are working closely with Guy's and St Thomas' to consider options for how best to provide targeted support to priority groups, such as children from conception to their first year of life, and those preparing to enter reception. Finally, public health have recently updated a rapid impact assessment of Covid-19 on inequalities, which will also inform future planning.

The Children and Family Centre teams have been working in the centres, and offering virtual and face to face, one to one and small group support throughout the pandemic whilst adhering to government guidance. Risk assessments have been undertaken to prioritise the need for face to face contact and followed guidance across Family Early Help and the Children & Families Division. Referrals for family support work continue to be accepted by Children and Family Centres and all new assessments prioritise a face to face contact (subject to risk assessment).

Staff are currently planning for wider reopening of indoor facilities and outdoor group activities in line with the government roadmap guidance. These preparations are particularly focused on achievement of Step 2 by 12 April 2021.