

<b>Item No.</b> 17.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 13 July 2021	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Southwark Great Estates Programme - Guarantee and Commitments	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>		Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Council Homes and Homelessness	

## **FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR STEPHANIE CRYAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES AND HOMELESSNESS**

The Great Estates programme sets out our vision for the future of Southwark council estates, to 'expand and enrich' our estates towards making them prized and valued spaces to live in. Our estate improvement plan pilots are also helping the council work towards our pledge to ensure our estates are properly clean, safe and cared for.

The following report sets out the responses of residents to our review of our service level standards. It sets out our final set of council responsibilities and commitments as well as highlighting resident opportunities that will help towards making our council estates better places to live.

The Great Estates Guarantee embeds best practices to ensure that we will listen to and respond to our residents and work effectively together to make our estates clean, safe and cared for.

The Great Estates commitments document sets out what residents can expect from the council in terms of caring for our estates, homes and buildings and gardens. It sets out how we will work with residents to help build strong local communities, which are the foundation stones for achieving truly great estates. While proposing what the council will do to help ensure our estates are kept clean and tidy, and as safe as possible.

It also sets out opportunities for residents to take an active role in helping to improve our estates, such as assisting with estate inspections, becoming involved with tenant and resident associations, or volunteering to help with gardening projects, working with our community garden coordinators.

I am proud of the way our residents have worked with our Great Estates Officers to develop some exceptional improvements to some of our estates through our Estate Improvement Plan Pilots. They have shown what is possible through working together to identify problems and develop resident centred solutions. I want to thank everyone who has taken part in the pilots and the survey. I look forward to continuing to engage with our residents and

hearing even more ideas for how to ensure our estates are clean, safe and cared for as we move forwards towards delivering our Great Estates Programme.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Cabinet notes the outcomes of the consultation with residents included in this report.
2. That Cabinet approves the Great Estates Guarantee which states that:

*“Southwark Council guarantees that we will listen to and respond to our residents and work effectively together to make our estates clean, safe and cared for.”*

3. That Cabinet approves the set of commitments set out in Appendix 1 for publication, following the consultation outcomes.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. This report sets out the process taken to consult with residents on the set of baseline commitments within the Great Estates Guarantee. Cabinet granted approval to consult on 7 April 2020. The report explores the outcome of the consultation, the demographics of respondents and confirms which areas residents feel they are able to contribute towards. The consultation was published on the council's consultation hub for a period of 6 weeks from 25 August 2020 to 18 October 2020. Following this the consultation was sent to the online residents' panel and remained open for a period of 4 weeks from 9 February 2021 to 12 March 2021.
5. The consultation sought to capture the views of a diverse as possible number of residents. In addition to publicising on the council's online consultation hub, the consultation was also presented at area housing forums, published in two editions of the council's newsletter; Southwark Life, and detailed information including posters were provided to the tenants and residents' associations, with posters displayed on noticeboards at the entrance of all estates in the borough. The consultation was reopened and sent to the online resident panel with the view to seek additional responses. In pre pandemic times there would have been more opportunity to engage face to face with residents at various meetings to present the consultation, however, current circumstances have led to a reliance on virtual meetings due to the lockdown and the impact this has had on the level of responses is recognised.
6. The Great Estates Programme guarantees that every estate is clean, safe and cared for, and provides the tools for residents to carry out gardening which provides benefits for the estate, community, individual general wellbeing and health. The council has put forward a number of commitments to meet the vision of the programme and the consultation

aimed to identify areas where residents would be empowered to take an active role in the vision for Great Estates. The consultation also sought views about the level of involvement residents would be prepared to carry out on their estates.

7. Last year the consultation on the Estate Improvement Plan pilots was carried out across the borough. Methods ranged from workshops, drop-ins, wish list ballots and other methods of engaging and involving residents. The feedback received covered a range of areas, the most popular of which were gardening and landscaping, maintenance, cleaning and anti-social behaviour. These themes formed the basis of the consultation along with a number of commitments designed to enhance the estates and surrounding areas.
8. The Great Estate Improvement Plan pilots tested new ways of working to deliver resident-led approaches to estate improvements. Pilots have been run across the following estates: Canada and Rockingham estates in the north of the borough, Elmington and Brandon estates in the centre and Rye Hill, Kingswood and Friary in the South. A number of improvements have already been delivered including the launch of the Allotment scheme and progress of gardening projects. At Brandon two new playgrounds, disabled ramp access, redesign of planting and food growing plots are just some of the completed improvements already delivered. Digital notice boards have been installed at Kingswood and Friary estates along with the installation of new lighting columns to deter anti-social behaviour.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

9. Cabinet is requested to note the outcome of the consultation with residents summarised below, and to approve the Great Estates Guarantee and the set of commitments set out in Appendix 1.
10. Although the number of responses received from the consultation was not as high as expected, the responses and feedback provided valuable insight and reinforced the direction for the commitments set out. The demographics of the respondents and breakdown of results is provided below.

### **Demographic breakdown of respondents**

11. There were 45 responses received to the original consultation and a further 11 responses from the online residents panel, with the majority of respondents (79%) stating they had lived in the borough for 6 years or more as seen in the table below.

<b>Length of residence in borough</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 1 year	2	4%
Less than 2 years	2	4%
Less than 3 years	4	7%
3-5 years	4	7%

<b>Length of residence in borough</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
6-10 years	10	18%
More than 10 years	20	36%
Always lived in Southwark	14	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>

12. 79% of responses were received from residents aged 25-64 and 16% of respondents were aged between 65-84 years. In order to address the likelihood that residents aged 25-64 were more comfortable with accessing online communication, we liaised with RSO's to identify vulnerable residents, including those in sheltered housing to help them complete the consultation, with the aim to capture the views of as many of these residents as possible. Of those responding to the consultation 5% chose not to complete the question on age. The age profile is shown in the table below.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Under 25	0	0%
25 - 34	12	21%
35 - 44	12	21%
45 - 54	10	18%
55 - 64	10	18%
65 - 74	7	13%
75 - 84	2	4%
85 - 94	0	0%
95+	0	0%
Not answered	3	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>

13. In reference to disability and health, 73% of respondents stated they did not have a disability, 9% stated they did have a disability and 18% preferred not to say or did not answer the question.
14. With regard to ethnicity 61% identified as white British, 3% as other European and 5% other white. Black Caribbean or mixed heritage accounted for 7% of respondents, Chinese 3%, Asian British 2%, other Asian 2%, other ethnic background 2% and not answered 16%.
15. There were more female respondents (59%) than males (34%) who completed the consultation, and approximately 8% choose not to answer the gender question.

## **Consultation results**

### **How likely were residents to take part in or contribute to estate inspections?**

16. Over 95% of responses addressed this question with 64% stating they were either fairly likely or very likely to contribute to the estate inspections.

Likelihood of contributing to estate inspections	Total	Percent
Very likely	14	25
Fairly likely	22	39
Not very likely	12	21
Not at all	5	9
Not answered	3	5
Total	56	100

17. Where the response given was not likely or not at all, reasons for this ranged from difficulties in contacting the cleaner/call centre with any complaints, working hours preventing attendance and not knowing when the inspections were due to take place. One response stated they would like more information about what would be expected of the resident doing the inspection and without knowing this information they would not be willing to sign up. Responses from the online panel echoed not knowing when the inspections were due to take place. One comment stated the estates were not necessarily wheelchair friendly to enable full participation.

#### To what extent did residents agree to keep the estate clean and tidy?

18. Almost 98% of responses addressed this question with just over 95% stating they either definitely or tended to agree that residents should play a part in keeping the estate where they live clean and tidy. Responses from the online panel were slightly lower with just over 90% stating that they definitely or tended to agree to this statement.

Agreement of personal responsibility in keeping the estate clean and tidy	Total	Percent
Definitely agree	41	73
Tend to agree	12	21
Tend to disagree	2	4
Definitely disagree	0	0
Not answered	1	2
Total	56	100

#### Do you agree with the commitments around keeping our estates clean?

19. This question received 100% of responses with just over 95% stating either definitely or tended to agree with the commitments around keeping our estates clean. Two respondents (4%) stated they tended to disagree with the statement. One respondent said they partly agreed but felt the council had a much bigger responsibility to engage, while another response disagreed that residents should clean or clear a landing shared with another resident. The responses from the online panel were 80% stating that they definitely or tended to agree with the commitments. Where they did not agree comments received included the frequency of internal cleaning was not carried out, and another stated the commitments

were a long way from reality.

**Do you agree with the commitments around keeping our estates cared for?**

20. Almost 98% of responses addressed this question with just over 93% stating that they either definitely or tended to agree with the commitments around keeping our estates cared for. Although some responses made additional comments of agreeing in principle however they felt this was not happening in practice. Just over 80% of the online panel definitely or tended to agree with the commitments, again responding that the reality did not marry up with the intent.

Agreement to commitments around keeping estates cared for	Total	Percent
Definitely agree	35	63
Tend to agree	16	29
Tend to disagree	1	2
Definitely disagree	3	5
Not answered	1	2
Total	56	100

21. Where the respondents disagreed with the statement one stated that repairs have been poorly done in the past requiring several visits to fix one issue, leading to feelings of wasting public money. Although they welcome the commitment “Repairs are easy to arrange and done right first time” – they wanted to know how the council will ensure this happens. Another respondent felt the council had distanced itself from residents and they did not have good communication with council operatives. An example was provided concerning “blinding lights fitted to landings where front doors could be seen from Mars”. Despite raising the issue the respondent had not felt listened to and stated nothing had been done to address the issue.

**Are you interested in taking part in gardening activities on your estate?**

22. 98% of responses addressed this question with 64% stating they would either like to, or would occasionally be interested, in taking part in gardening activities as demonstrated in the table below.

Interest in taking part in gardening activities on the estate	Total	Percent
Yes	17	30
No	19	34
Occasionally	19	34
Not answered	1	2
Total	56	100

23. Additional comments made were that residents were very interested and

would like to make better use of estate land, they suggested tools should be provided and on site composting facilities for residents to recycle kitchen waste.

**To what extent do residents have a role to play in keeping their estate and surrounding areas free from fire, crime and anti-social behaviour?**

24. 96% of responses addressed this question with 87% stating that they either definitely or tended to agree with the statement. 9% stated they either tended not to agree or disagreed. The reasons for not agreeing with the statement were not provided.

**Do you agree with the commitments around keeping our estates safe?**

25. This question received 98% of responses with 91% stating either definitely or tended to agree with the commitments around keeping our estates safe. Three respondents (5%) tended to disagree with the statement and a further 1 respondent (2%) definitely disagreed. Additional comments received were requests for CCTV or an entry gate system to the block have not been responded to. Suggestions included frequent police presence and a council commitment to check that repairs are completed to a good standard; examples provided of snagging not carried out where smoke alarms and control panels have been fitted. Also the expense of fob keys where additional or replacement sets are needed leads some residents to leave doors propped open.

**How likely are you to get involved in resident involvement structures where you live?**

26. 97% of responses addressed this question with 80% stating they were either very likely or fairly likely to get involved. 11% stated it was not very likely and 5% stated not at all. Some comments were made that they were unsure if there was a TRA where they lived.

**NEXT STEPS**

27. As there was broad agreement to the proposals in the consultation, only very minor clarifications have been made to the final version included in Appendix 1. Therefore this report recommends that Cabinet approves the Great Estates Guarantee which states that:

*Southwark Council guarantees that we will listen to and respond to our residents and work effectively together to make our estates clean, safe and cared for.*

28. Cabinet is also asked to agree the set of commitments which will be reviewed on a regular basis.
29. Where a minority of comments were received that did not support the commitment; such as being unwilling to take part in estate inspections,

this provides the council with information that can be passed onto Resident Service Officers to develop actions or provide greater clarity regarding expectations which may encourage residents to take part.

30. The results of the consultation will be published on the Great Estates webpage and in the Southwark Life magazine. The information will also be displayed on the notice boards at the entrance to the estates across the borough. The results will be provided to the Tenant and Resident associations in the borough and a summary of the results will be emailed to any of the respondents who requested feedback in this form.
31. If the council does not meet its commitments within the guarantee, residents should first contact the resident services officer on the estate to advise what has not been carried out or omitted. The council has service standards in place to cover our commitments such as arranging repairs and cleaning and maintaining communal areas. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the local service manager will deal with the complaint at stage one. If the complaint has not been resolved at stage one, the customer resolution team will arrange for an investigation of the complaint to be carried out, which is stage two of the complaints procedure. In the event that both stages fail to resolve the complaint, residents will be informed of their right to refer the complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

### **Policy implications**

32. Cabinet approved for consultation to be undertaken on the set of baseline standards in the Great Estates Guarantee and Commitments that underline the Great Estates programme on 7 April 2020. This paper is limited to detailing the results of the consultation on the commitments within the programme that residents are asked to support. Therefore there are no policy implications for consideration.

### **Community impact statement**

33. The council is committed to improve the local area and the quality of life for the whole community who live there. The Guarantee and Commitments paper has been developed with tenants to agree a baseline set of standards that ensure the council's estates are clean, safe and cared for and benefit all communities living in our estates. The consultation sought to find out the level of interest residents have in the proposed commitments and to provide a means of community engagement.
34. The consultation was carried out with due regard to the differing needs of the community and the protected characteristics under the public sector equality duty. We liaised with resident services officers (RSOs) to identify vulnerable tenants who may require extra support due to disability or language barriers and these residents were written to separately. We made translation services available to help any tenants with language

barriers. Telephone calls were conducted with our disabled tenants who may not have been able to complete the consultation online. In order to comply with social distancing during covid-19 we only visited homes in exceptional circumstances where there was cause to be concerned about a resident's welfare.

### **Resource implications**

35. The Great Estates Guarantee and Commitments will be managed within existing resources.

### **Legal implications**

36. The legal implications and other comments from the Director of Law and Governance are set out below in the advice from the Director of Law and Governance.

### **Financial implications**

37. Cabinet considered and agreed the financial implications at the onset of the Great Estates Programme. The Guarantee and the Commitments will be managed within existing resources.

### **Consultation**

38. The council held a public call for ideas on the Great Estates Programme - Estate Improvement Plans through an online survey on the Council's consultation hub. Hard copies of the survey were also provided at Community Councils. The consultation took place from 20 May 2019 to 01 July 2019. There was a large response; 388 responses were received, many of which were incredibly detailed and covered suggestions from across the range of issues; gardening projects, community art, waste, cleaning, community activities etc. These comments have informed the estate improvement plans pilots and formed the basis for the consultation on the resident commitments.
39. We sought to find out how residents felt about the commitments they had already expressed an interest in, and the level to which they may be prepared to get involved. The consultation questions are provided in full at Appendix 2. As stated in the background section of this report, the consultation was published on the council's consultation hub for a period of 6 weeks from 25 August 2020 to 18 October 2020. Following this the consultation was sent to the online residents' panel and remained open for a period of 4 weeks from 9 February 2021 to 12 March 2021.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Director of Law and Governance**

40. The report sets out the consultation carried out on the council's commitments within the Great Estates Guarantee. Cabinet must take into account the outcome of the consultation, when taking a decision on the recommendations.
41. Due regard must also be given to the public sector equality duty (PSED) in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This requires the council to consider all individuals when carrying out their functions. Regard must be given, to eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct; advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and, fostering good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and those that do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
42. In taking a decision on the recommendations, cabinet should consider the equality impact information provided in this report, in particular in the Community Impact Statement.

### **Strategic Director of Finance and Governance**

43. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance notes the outcome of the consultation with residents on the set of baseline commitments for the Great Estates Programme. There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report, however, in addition to the costs arising from the agreed project commitments, the extra cost of dedicated project support and any on-going revenue costs associated with completed projects, need to be managed within the annual Great Estates base budget (£970k).

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
The Council Plan 2018-2022	Chief Executives Office	Stephen Gaskell 0207 525 500
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/council-plan">http://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/council-plan</a>		
Southwark Great Estates Programme - Paper 1 - Agreeing the Vision and Approach	Housing Strategy	Robert Weallans 0207 525 500
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6665">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6665</a>		

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Great Estates Guarantee Cabinet Report March/April 2020 (Moved to April due to the pandemic)	Housing Strategy	Sheryl Charles 020 7525 1858
<b>Link (please copy and paste into browser):</b> <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s88199/Report%20Great%20Estates%20Guarantee.pdf">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s88199/Report%20Great%20Estates%20Guarantee.pdf</a>		

## APPENDICES

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	The Southwark Great Estates Guarantee, resident responsibilities and council commitments
Appendix 2	Great Estates Guarantee and Commitments Residents' Survey

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Council Homes and Homelessness	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Michael Scorer, Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation	
<b>Report Author</b>	Sheryl Charles, Housing Strategy Implementation Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	30 June 2021	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Director of Law and Governance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	30 June 2021	