

# Agenda Item 5.

<b>Item No.</b> 5.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> November 4 2009	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Members' Question Time	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.8 member's question time shall not exceed 30 minutes. During this time, members may not question any one executive member or committee chair for longer than fifteen minutes.

Members are limited to one question at each meeting.

Questions to the leader will be taken first, followed by questions to other executive members and on the portfolio for education and school attainment. The order in which the different political groups ask questions of the leader will be rotated. Questions to executive members will be taken in the order of receipt and portfolio. The order of portfolios will be rotated at each meeting such that the executive member answering questions immediately after the leader will be the last executive member to answer any questions at the next meeting of council assembly.

Executive members and committee chairs have discretion to refer a question to another executive member if this is appropriate.

Responses to member's questions will be circulated on yellow paper around the council chamber on the evening of the meeting.

The Mayor will ask the member asking the question if they wish to ask one supplemental question to the member to whom the question was asked. The supplemental question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. Therefore, supplemental questions to the leader or other executive members are not free ranging.

No question shall be asked on a matter concerning a planning or licensing application.

**Note:** In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.8 (12) & (13) (prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the order in which questions to the leader appear in this report may not necessarily be the order in which they are considered at the meeting.

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JENNY JONES**

What progress has been made on working with the Mayor of London to make Southwark 20mph default borough?

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL SAMERAI**

Does the leader of the council agree with the minister of state for housing's view that 'The resources local authorities receive for management and maintenance and major repairs should enable them to implement necessary fire safety measures in council housing.'?

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN**

For what reason were the estimated figures for the costs of bringing Southwark's local authority housing stock up to the government's decent homes standard and to the Southwark decent homes standard removed from the final version of the 2009-16 housing strategy?

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD THOMAS**

Remembrance Sunday is just four days away when we remember the millions of UK and Commonwealth citizens who died to protect our right to vote. What steps is the council taking to encourage people to register to vote?

**5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT SMEATH**

For what reason did the council decide to move the offer date for primary school places back to May 10 2010? Does he accept that this looks suspiciously like an attempt to keep this issue out of the spotlight until after the elections, given that other London boroughs, including neighbouring Lambeth, have stuck with the date of April 24?

**6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

The council has recently signed up to the 10:10 carbon reduction pledge. How does it intend to do this?

**7. QUESTION LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD**

How confident is the leader about the forecast of primary school applications in Dulwich for next year's intake? How confident was he at this time last year about the forecast for this year's intake?

**8. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR HELEN JARDINE-BROWN**

How does the council support and encourage young single parents back into employment and/or education?

**9. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DORA DIXON-FYLE**

Since becoming leader, how many letters have you received from Southwark's MPs and London assembly members and how many, broken down by sender, have you replied to?

**10. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MACKIE SHEIK**

What continuing steps are the council taking to promote the Cross River Tram?

**11. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR AUBYN GRAHAM**

My colleagues and I have a number of corporate complaints on housing matters that we have still not received a 'full response' for, despite repeated missed deadlines for those full responses. Some have been outstanding for as much as six months or more. Do you agree with me that six months is too long to wait for a complaint to be answered, let alone fully resolved? How would you rate your satisfaction with the system at the moment? How do you intend to improve the service that Southwark residents receive from the council's corporate complaints?

**12. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR BOB SKELLY**

Why does Labour's Education and Inspection Act give priority to anyone else to build and run a new school rather than the council?

**13. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON**

Given the troubles facing the ALMO in Lambeth, does the leader think that tenants in Southwark are right to continue to oppose these schemes and right to seek proper investment in their homes as tenants of the council?

**14. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE ZULETA**

Will the council sign up to the London Citizens' 'Strangers into Citizens' campaign for the one-off regularisation of long term irregular migrants?

**15. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER**

What impact is the Equalities Bill likely to have on tackling homophobic harrassment?

**16. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR COLUMBA BLANGO**

In 'Building Britain's Future' the Prime Minister repeats the claim that immigrants and asylum seekers get priority for council housing, what effect does this sort of misinformation have on community relations in this borough?

**17. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR ELIZA MANN**

Will the executive member tell the council assembly what evidence she gave, on behalf of the council, to the parliamentary joint committee on human rights investigation into the human rights duties relating to local authorities as set out in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill?

**18. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CITIZENSHIP, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR TOBY ECKERSLEY**

Would the executive member outline what steps are being taken to make better use of Southwark Life in publicising the existence, meeting dates and activities of the community councils?

**19. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MITCHELL**

What representations will she make to the government and Metropolitan police to secure the pensions for retiring police officers injured in the line of duty?

**20. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR ALISON MCGOVERN**

Could the executive member confirm that no fire risk assessments had been carried out on local authority owned tower blocks in Southwark before April 24 this year? Can she provide a reason why this was the case?

**21. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR FIONA COLLEY**

Despite a third of Nunhead Green being a dedicated dog exercise area, a number of owners are exercising their dogs off the lead in the other area and often not "scooping" up. This behaviour is putting many parents off using the Green and the brand new childrens play area. What enforcement action is being taken to ensure owners control their dogs on Nunhead Green?

**22. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN FRIARY**

Before the last election, the leader of the council said that he didn't like ASBOs and Southwark has been less eager to use them than other London boroughs in the past. Does the Executive Member now accept that these tools have helped make Southwark a safer place?

**23. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR JELIL LADIPO**

Can the executive member outline the savings associated with the move of the council's back office function to Tooley Street?

**24. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR CAROLINE PIDGEON**

For the financial years 2006-07 to 2009-10 could the executive member please advise the council assembly how many Southwark residents had an arrangement or formal payment plan to pay their council tax monthly in cash on a date other than the first day of the month?

**25. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE**

The executive member is on record as saying that he thinks Liberata have performed poorly in fulfilling the council tax collection contract. Given that this was clear in early 2008, why did he and his colleagues decide to reappoint them at that time?

**26. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER**

Could the executive member please provide details of the cost of installing plasma TV screens across the Tooley Street building. They appear to show BBC television news. Does the executive member believe this is an appropriate use of council resources?

**27. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR JANE SALMON**

What is the likely cost of Gordon Brown's proposal to force all 16 and 17 year old single mums into a network of supervised homes?

**28. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR ALTHEA SMITH**

The executive member has previously said that much of the furniture which had been in use at council premises around the borough would be re-used at Tooley Street. How many items, broken down by type, have been transferred to Tooley Street? Does the executive member have any idea of the value of the furniture dumped by the council?

**29. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR TAYO SITU**

Further to council assembly motion 8.2 on November 5 2008, can the executive member tell me what review has been carried out of Southwark Council's procurement, contract and best value policies; what measures he has put in place to ensure Southwark's partners in the local strategic partnership pay no less than the London Living Wage and, how he is promoting the London Living Wage and London Citizens' Living Wage Employer Award to the private sector in Southwark?

**30. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR KIM HUMPHREYS**

To ask the executive member for resources to provide details of the number of enquiries received by officers and members over the past 12 months and the cost, both monetary and in officer time, including the cost of any external advice required dealing with those individuals whom the council is considering classifying as unreasonable and persistent complainants under the council's habitual complainants policy?

**31. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR NICK VINEALL**

Gordon Brown has announced an asset sale of some £16 billion last week. How much of this is targeted at local authority assets, what difference would it make to the government's record debts, and could this force the sell off of vital amenities to meet his arbitrary targets?

**32. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR CHRIS PAGE**

When does the executive member expect the Heygate estate demolition and rebuild to be fully completed? How has this deadline changed since the demolition was formally and finally agreed by the council?

**33. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR DOMINIC THORNCROFT**

In 2006 the council allocated a five year budget of £14.5 million for the Nunhead and East Peckham renewal area. Six months ago, local councillors met with senior officers to seek an update, but despite officers indicating that a progress review was in hand, no further information has yet been forthcoming:

- a) Please provide an itemised breakdown of spending that has been made from the allocated budget;
- b) Please provide an itemised breakdown of spending that is committed to be made from the allocated budget;
- c) How much money remains in this specific budget for allocation on this renewal area?

**34. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR MICHELLE HOLFORD**

Would the executive member for regeneration please advise on progress towards persuading, in conjunction with Lambeth Council, TfL/London Buses to improve bus services in the middle and south of the borough with particular reference to:

- a) Inadequate provision of public transport southwesterly from Peckham through Dulwich towards the Gypsy Hill/Tulse hill area; and
- b) The proposed actions arising from the joint meeting of Southwark and Lambeth members and officers held on June 17 2009 at which the above matter, and others, was addressed.

Would the executive member please also provide an up-date on progress towards extending the route 42 bus from North Dulwich to East Dulwich as supported by resolution of council assembly on July 8 2009.

**35. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR BARRIE HARGROVE**

Could the executive member confirm that there are currently no air quality monitoring stations operational in the borough? Can he provide the dates of each monitoring station closure since 2002?

**36. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR GORDON NARDELL**

In November 2007, the then executive member for environment told council assembly that the executive intended to make Southwark a completely 20mph zone by 2010. Leaving aside the special case of TfL roads and other major routes, does he expect to meet that target?

**37. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD**

The housing strategy 2009-16 suggests that the executive is not intending to bring any homes to the Southwark decent homes standard after 2010-11. Are the executive member and his colleagues abandoning their aspiration to bring all the council's stock to this higher standard?

**38. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES GURLING**

Could he explain what is happening with council funding for Walworth Garden Farm?

**39. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL BATES**

Can the executive member please detail the number of recorded lift outages in Faraday ward since July 1 2008 to date and detail the reason for the outage and the length of time taken to put the lifts back into working order?

**40. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER**

Councillors represent their constituents seven days a week and I often get calls from residents about urgent housing casework at the weekend. Why is the members line at the call centre not open at the weekend?

**41. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR KIRSTY MCNEILL**

The housing strategy 2009-16 contains no significant proposals to improve the quality and responsiveness of the housing repairs service, yet along with all of my Labour group colleagues I continue to receive significant quantities of casework arising from the shortcomings of this service. Why is there such a significant omission from the strategy?

**42. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON**

Of those leaseholders whose homes have been subject to compulsory purchase or otherwise bought by the council on the Heygate estate as part of the regeneration, how many has the council re-housed as tenants? Does the executive member know how many of those who the council has not re-housed have left Southwark to find new housing elsewhere?