

Council Assembly (Ordinary Meeting)

MINUTES of the Council Assembly (ordinary meeting) held on Wednesday 15 July 2020 at 7.00 pm.

Themes: Southwark Together: Council Response to COVID-19 pandemic/Southwark Stands Together: Southwark's commitment to tackle racial inequalities

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor for 2019-20, Councillor Sandra Rhule (Chair)

Councillor Evelyn Akoto	Councillor Richard Livingstone
Councillor Anood Al-Samerai	Councillor Rebecca Lury
Councillor Humaira Ali	Councillor Alice Macdonald
Councillor Jasmine Ali	Councillor Eliza Mann
Councillor Peter Babudu	Councillor James McAsh
Councillor Maggie Browning	Councillor Hamish McCallum
Councillor Radha Burgess	Councillor Darren Merrill
Councillor Victor Chamberlain	Councillor Victoria Mills
Councillor Sunil Chopra	Councillor Adele Morris
Councillor James Coldwell	Councillor Graham Neale
Councillor Stephanie Cryan	Councillor Margy Newens
Councillor Helen Dennis	Councillor David Noakes
Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE	Councillor Damian O'Brien
Councillor Nick Dolezal	Councillor Jason Ochere
Councillor Karl Eastham	Councillor Leo Pollak
Councillor Gavin Edwards	Councillor Catherine Rose
Councillor Paul Fleming	Councillor Jane Salmon
Councillor Tom Flynn	Councillor Martin Seaton
Councillor Renata Hamvas	Councillor Andy Simmons
Councillor Barrie Hargrove	Councillor Michael Situ
Councillor Jon Hartley	Councillor Johnson Situ
Councillor William Hounbo	Councillor Charlie Smith
Councillor Peter John OBE	Councillor Cleo Soanes
Councillor Nick Johnson	Councillor Leanne Werner
Councillor Sarah King	Councillor Dan Whitehead
Councillor Sunny Lambe	Councillor Kath Whittam
Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE	Councillor Bill Williams
Councillor Richard Leeming	Councillor Kieron Williams
Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall	Councillor Ian Wingfield

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jack Buck, Sirajul Islam, Eleanor Kerslake and Victoria Olisa.

1.2 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Nick Johnson on his appointment as leader of the Liberal Democrat group.

Councillor Nick Johnson thanked Councillor Anood Al-Samerai, the outgoing leader of the Liberal Democrat group, and Councillor John, the outgoing leader of the council.

Councillor Peter John, leader of the council, welcomed Councillor Johnson to the leadership and thanked Councillor Al-Samerai for her efforts on behalf of Southwark.

1.3 NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE MAYOR DEEMS URGENT

At this point the programme motion was agreed:

The order of business and timings for the evening will be as follows:

Time	Business
19:00 - 19:15	1. Preliminary business and announcements
19:15 - 20:20 (15 minutes)	Themed debate Southwark Together: Council Response to COVID-19 pandemic
3.1 Community Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alhaji Tajudeen Salami, Chief Imam of Old Kent Road Mosque• Felicia Boshorin, Central Southwark Community Hub• Chris Price, Pecan• Eloise Dickens, Anima Youth
(7 minutes)	3.2 Motion on the Theme
(5 minutes)	1. Councillor Peter John
(35 minutes)	2. Councillor Nick Johnson, opposition spokesperson, to speak on the motion and move Amendment A
(3 minutes)	3. Themed debate open to all other councillors
	4. Cabinet member's right of reply to the debate
Five minute break	
20:25 - 21:30	Themed debate Southwark Stands Together: Southwark's commitment to tackle racial inequalities
(15 minutes)	3.1 Community Evidence

(7 minutes) (5 minutes) (35 minutes) (3 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicholas Okwulu • Ebenezer Mensah • Dr Victor Olisa QPM • Ayesha Ahmad, Southwark Scholars • Oliur Rahman, Active Communities Network <p>3.2 Motion on the Theme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councillor Johnson Situ 2. Councillor William Hougbo, opposition spokesperson, to speak on the motion and move Amendment A 3. Themed debate open to all other councillors 4. Cabinet member's right of reply to the debate
21:30 – 21:40	5.1 Members' Question Time (two questions, one supplemental each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members' questions to the leader
21:40*	6. Reports
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Bank and Waterloo Neighbourhood Plan Area • Pay Policy Statement • Member Allowances Scheme 2020-21 • Calendar of meetings • Annual Special Urgency report • Treasury Management Performance - 2019-20 annual report and prudential indicators

* subject to the guillotine rule; maximum 15 minutes debate per item.

Note: Any time left remaining on any item will be rolled into the next items.

That the meeting be conducted as follows:

Item 3 - Themed debate

Community Evidence Submissions

To receive submissions from the groups listed in the themed section of the agenda:

Southwark Together: Council Response to COVID-19 pandemic

- Alhaji Tajudeen Salami, Chief Imam of Old Kent Road Mosque
- Felicia Boshorin, Central Southwark Community Hub
- Chris Price, Pecan
- Eloise Dickens, Anima Youth

Southwark Stands Together: Southwark's commitment to tackle racial inequalities

- Nicholas Okwulu
- Ebenezer Mensah
- Dr Victor Olisa QPM

- Ayesha Ahmad, Southwark Scholars
- Oliur Rahman, Active Communities Network

And to note the written representation listed as point 10 at item 3.1.

Format

A three minute presentation from the community evidence presenter; if the presenter would like to ask a question, they will receive a written response from the cabinet member after the meeting.

Themed debate

To run as listed in the timings above.

Amendment B

To delete the words "the objectives of" as set out below:

"b. Places on record the support of Southwark Council for ~~the objectives of~~ the Black Lives Matter movement and for all similar initiatives."

Voting

For all decisions not agreed by acclaim, voting will proceed as follows:

The chair will ask all councillors in favour of a motion or amendment to click on the "Yes" button in Zoom; and all those against to click on the "No" button.

Any councillor not voting in good time will be called on individually to declare their vote.

These will be tallied and the clerk will announce the number of votes in favour and the number of votes against.

The chair will then ask all councillors who are abstaining from voting to click on the "Yes" button in Zoom, and the number of abstentions will then be tallied.

The chair will then announce the outcome of the vote.

1.4 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor William Hougbo, non-pecuniary interest in item 3.1, as he is a trustee of the Active Community Network. He has no financial interest in this organisation.

Councillor Dan Whitehead, pecuniary interest in item 3.2, "Southwark Stands Together", as his partner is an employee of an NHS Trust. Councillor Whitehead was not present during the consideration and voting on this item.

Councillor Richard Leeming, pecuniary interest in item 3.2, "Southwark Stands Together", as his partner is an employee of an NHS Trust. Councillor Leeming was not present during the consideration and voting on this item.

1.5 MINUTES

The minutes of 26 February 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

2. ISSUES RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

2.1 PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

3. THEMED DEBATE

3.1 COMMUNITY EVIDENCE

The meeting received submissions from the following:

Southwark Together: Council Response to COVID-19 pandemic

- Felicia Boshorin, Central Southwark Community Hub
- Chris Price, Pecan
- Eloise Dickens, Anima Youth

Southwark Stands Together: Southwark's commitment to tackle racial inequalities

- Nicholas Okwulu
- Ebenezer Mensah
- Dr Victor Olisa QPM
- Ayesha Ahmad, Joshua Moses, Dominique Manshadi, Umu Lamina, Anita Iyi; Southwark Scholars
- Oliur Rahman, Active Communities Network

They each spoke to the meeting for three minutes. Cabinet members committed to respond to questions in writing following the meeting.

3.2 MOTIONS ON THE THEME

The leader of the council, Councillor Peter John, presented the first motion in the themed debate.

Councillor Nick Johnson, the majority opposition group spokesperson, responded to the cabinet member's motion and proposed Amendment A.

Following debate (Councillor Kieron Williams, Councillor Lorraine Lauder, Councillor David Noakes, Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Councillor Catherine Rose, Councillor Victor Chamberlain, Councillor Vicki Mills, Councillor James McAsh, Councillor Anood Al-Samerai, Councillor Jasmine Ali), Councillor Peter John, responded to the debate.

Amendment A was put to the vote and declared to be Lost.

The motion was put to the vote and declared to be Carried.

RESOLVED:

Southwark Together: Council Response to COVID-19 pandemic

1. Council assembly notes:
 - a. That coronavirus has caused a period of unprecedented crisis in our borough, with over 1,200 reported cases in the borough.
 - b. That the council has risen to meet the challenge created by this crisis, working with the borough's voluntary and community sectors to help those in need.
 - c. That, as of 19 June 2020, the council had:
 - i) Contacted over 20,000 shielded and vulnerable residents to offer them support and ask what help they need.
 - ii) Responded to over 1,400 helpline requests for food or other support.
 - iii) Delivered over 13,000 emergency food packages to prevent local residents from going hungry.
 - iv) Carried out over 600 door to door welfare checks with vulnerable residents.
 - v) Distributed over £500,000 through community support grants.
 - vi) Provided over £1.1m of emergency financial support to help residents pay for essentials such as food and fuel.
 - vii) Helped 16,000 council tax payers with hardship support funds for Council Tax, at a cost of £2.4m.
 - viii) Supported businesses across the borough with over £59.5m of business grants.
 - ix) Housed 323 people who were at imminent risk of sleeping rough or actually sleeping rough, with 187 already supported to move to a long-term home, and responded to an average of 138 people per day contacting the council for help with housing solutions.
2. Council assembly believes:
 - a. That providing this high level of support for our borough's residents, businesses and voluntary sector was the right thing to do, despite the financial pressure that this now puts the council under.
 - b. That the financial burden of coronavirus should not fall solely on the council: the Government should support councils financially both now and during the period of economic recovery.
 - c. That unlike the council, the government has responded inadequately to the crisis, and should have taken steps sooner to protect care homes, introduce test and trace, and adequately plan for the re-opening of schools.
3. Council assembly expresses:
 - a. The condolences of all councillors to all the families of those who have lost loved ones as a result of this virus.
 - b. The thanks of all councillors to the NHS, council workers, mutual aid groups and volunteers for their hard work, and all who have played their part in controlling the spread of the virus by following social distancing guidance.
4. Council assembly resolves to call on cabinet:

- a. To continue to work with the voluntary and community sector and NHS in the borough through the council's community hub to support our residents, businesses and community through this period of crisis, and into the longer period of economic recovery.
- b. To continue to provide support to vulnerable residents who are being let down by this Government's apparent plans to cut off their support after 31 July 2020.
- c. To lobby the government to fully resource and fund councils during this period of crisis and the ensuing financial recovery period.
- d. To hold a service of remembrance to commemorate all council staff and residents who have passed away during this time.
- e. To reaffirm that Southwark remains United to Serve.

Councillor Johnson Situ, Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning, presented the second motion in the themed debate.

Councillor William Hougbo, the majority opposition group spokesperson, responded to the cabinet member's motion and proposed Amendment B.

Following debate (Councillor Cleo Soanes, Councillor Sunny Lambe, Councillor Humaira Ali, Councillor Evelyn Akoto, Councillor Alice Macdonald, Councillor Peter Babudu, Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall, Councillor Martin Seaton, Councillor Jon Hartley, Councillor Graham Neale, Councillor Leo Pollak), Councillor Johnson Situ responded to the debate.

Amendment B was put to the vote and declared to be Carried.

The motion was put to the vote and declared to be Carried.

RESOLVED:

Southwark Stands Together: Southwark's commitment to tackle racial inequalities

1. Council assembly:
 - a. Stands united against racism, injustice and racial inequalities, alongside and in solidarity with the Black Community, following the murder of George Floyd and recent events.
 - b. Places on record the support of Southwark Council for the Black Lives Matter movement and for all similar initiatives.
 - c. Recognises the contributions that all communities, races and cultures have made to Southwark in the past and will continue to make in future.
 - d. Welcomes the commitment to integrate equality and diversity in all that the council undertakes, and in the work undertaken with the council's partners, through the 'fairer future for all' commitments.
 - e. Welcomes recent council policies to address inequalities including access to higher education through the Southwark Scholars initiative, and access to training, apprenticeships and employment through the Southwark Construction Skills Centre.
2. Council assembly acknowledges:
 - a. Despite recent advancements there are still deep structural inequalities within society. According to a 2018 study by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, 35.7 per cent of ethnic minorities were living in poverty.

- b. According to the government's own statistics, Black people are almost 10 times more likely to be stopped and searched over all, and 40 times more likely to be stopped and searched under section 60 powers.
 - c. Black Caribbean and Mixed White/Black Caribbean children have rates of permanent exclusion about three times that of the pupil population as a whole.
 - d. That a recent Office for National Statistics report found that the BAME community have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, with those from BAME communities almost twice as likely to die as white people.
3. Council assembly notes:
- a. Southwark Council's steps to address racial inequalities and injustices through a new initiative Southwark Stands Together.
 - b. That on 17 July 2019 Council Assembly agreed a cross-party motion which called upon Cabinet to implement 9 recommendations aimed at promoting equality and valuing diversity in Southwark¹.
 - c. the Prime Minister's recent announcement of a commission to look into racial disparities and inequality
 - d. the unimplemented recommendations from previous reviews
4. Council assembly believes that now more than ever action is needed that goes beyond warm words.
5. Therefore, council assembly resolves to call on cabinet to:
- a. Bring forward the recommendations from Southwark Stands Together work to be considered and adopted at the earliest opportunity once it has been concluded in the autumn.
 - b. Direct the Southwark Stands Together working group to review the recommendations from the motion "Promoting Equality and Valuing Diversity" agreed on 17 July 2019 and to report back to Cabinet as soon as possible with an action plan to take forward those which have not yet been implemented.
 - c. Call on the Prime Minister to implement the recommendations from the:
 - i) Lammy report
 - ii) Angiolini review
 - iii) Home Office Windrush review
 - iv) McGregor-Smith review
 - v) Macpherson report.
 and introduce a Race Equality Strategy to tackle racial injustice across the UK.
 - d. Use relevant recommendations from the reviews listed above to feed into the council's current work on Southwark Stands Together.
 - e. Call on employers and other public agencies such as the Metropolitan Police Service and the NHS to also join the council in carrying out similar reviews in to racial and health inequalities and anti-racist audits.
 - f. Call on the government to implement the recommendation from the review of Public Health England into the disproportionate impact of COVID19 on the BAME community.

¹ <http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?!D=54249>

4. ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

4.1 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

There were two members' questions, the written responses to which were circulated at the meeting. As the guillotine had fallen, there were no supplemental questions.

5. REPORT(S) FOR DECISION

5.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING - PLAN TO BE MADE A MATERIAL CONSIDERATION IN PLANNING DECISIONS RELATING TO THE SOUTH BANK AND WATERLOO NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Councillors Adele Morris and Martin Seaton spoke on the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That council assembly endorsed the recommendation of cabinet to make the South Bank and Waterloo Neighbourhood Plan so that it becomes part of the council's development plan and is a significant consideration in all planning decisions relating to the designated Neighbourhood Area.

5.2 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

RESOLVED:

1. That the council's pay policy statement, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be agreed.

5.3 MEMBER ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2020-2021

RESOLVED:

1. That council assembly approved the Member Allowances Scheme for 2020-2021 with effect from 1 April 2020, having regard to the advice of the London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel Report 2018 (see Appendix 1 of the report).

5.4 COUNCIL ASSEMBLY DATES AND CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2020-21

RESOLVED:

1. That council assembly agreed the following dates for meetings of council assembly be fixed in the council calendar for the 2020-21 municipal year:

Council Assembly	Type of Meeting
Wednesday 16 September 2020	Annual Meeting
Wednesday 25 November 2020	Ordinary meeting

Wednesday 24 February 2021	Budget and council tax setting
Wednesday 24 March 2021	Ordinary meeting
Saturday 8 May 2021 <i>Note: Alternative dates are Monday 17 May 2021 or Monday 24 May 2021</i>	Annual meeting <i>Note: To be held jointly with Civic Awards Ceremony</i>

2. That council assembly noted the calendar of council meetings for the 2020-21 municipal year as shown at Appendix 1 of the report.

5.5 SPECIAL URGENCY AND URGENT IMPLEMENTATION DECISIONS - ANNUAL REPORT

RESOLVED:

1. That council assembly noted the schedule of special urgency and urgent implementation decisions (set out in Appendix 1 of the report) taken in accordance with access to information procedure rules 19 and 20.

5.6 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE - 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

RESOLVED:

1. That Council Assembly noted the 2019-20 outturn for the council's treasury management activity and that:
 - all treasury management activity was undertaken in compliance with the approved treasury management strategy and with the council's prudential indicators, as Appendix A of the report;
 - the balance remaining on all external loans at 31 March 2020 was £810m, with £81m of new long-term borrowing drawn during financial year, all long-term borrowing is to support the growth in capital investment.

6. AMENDMENTS

Amendments are set out in supplemental agenda no. 2.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm.

CHAIR:

DATED: