

<b>Item No.</b> 3.2	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 15 July 2020	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>	Motions on the Themes:  Southwark Together: Council Response to COVID-19 pandemic  Southwark Stands Together: Southwark's commitment to tackle racial inequalities		
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>	All		
<b>From:</b>	Proper Constitutional Officer		

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The themes for this meeting are Southwark Together: Council Response to COVID-19 pandemic and Southwark Stands Together: Southwark's commitment to tackle racial inequalities.

The relevant cabinet member shall submit a motion on the theme. All other political groups on the council are allowed to submit one amendment to the motion. The cabinet member's motion and the amendments do not need to be seconded. The cabinet member will present the motion to the meeting, followed by the lead opposition spokesperson's response and moving of their amendment, if any. Following this, the subject matter of the theme will be open to debate. Amendment(s) from other opposition groups on the council can be moved during this part of the meeting.

### Motion from Councillor Peter John, Leader of the Council

#### 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.

**Motion from Councillor Johnson Situ, Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning**

**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. Recognises the contributions that all communities, races and cultures have made to Southwark in the past and will continue to make in future.
  - c. 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.
  - d. 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. the Prime Minister's recent announcement of a commission to look into racial disparities and inequality
  - c. 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. 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.
  - c. Use relevant recommendations from the reviews listed above to feed into the council's current work on Southwark Stands Together.
  - d. 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.
  - e. 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.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Cabinet members motion	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Andrew Weir 020 7525 7222

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
<b>Report Author</b>	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	26 June 2020