

Ca



CABINET

Monday, 8th January, 2007 at 7.00 pm

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Donatus Anyanwu
Councillor Mark Bennett
Councillor Jim Dickson
Councillor John Kazantzis
Councillor Paul McGlone
Councillor Jackie Meldrum
Councillor Lib Peck
Councillor Sally Prentice
Councillor Steve Reed

Portfolio:

Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Services
Cabinet Member for Community Safety
Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet Member for Housing
Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise
Deputy Leader of the Council
Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Leader of the Council

Apologies for absence

Also present:

Councillor Kingsley Abrams, Councillor Adedamola Aminu, Councillor Clive Bennett, Councillor Diana Braithwaite, Councillor Lorna Campbell, Councillor Jeremy Clyne, Councillor Gavin Dodsworth, Councillor Roger Giess, Councillor Nigel Haselden, Councillor Julian Heather, Councillor Irene Kimm, Councillor Ashley Lumsden, Councillor Kirsty McHugh, Councillor Alex McKenna, Councillor Florence Nosegbe, Councillor Helen O'Malley, Councillor Graham Pycock, Councillor Peter Robbins, Councillor Darren Sanders, Councillor Andrew Sawdon, Councillor Christiana Valcarcel, Councillor Christopher Wellbelove, Councillor John Whelan and Councillor Clare Whelan

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Jim Dickson, Paul McGlone, Jackie Meldrum, Lib Peck and Sally Prentice all declared a non-prejudicial interest in Item 12 (Minute Item 3) as they lived in Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ). Councillor Jackie Meldrum declared a personal and pecuniary interest in Item 9 (Minute Item 4). For this reason Councillor Jackie Meldrum would retire from the meeting during the discussion of this item.

2. MINUTES (27.11.06)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th November 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the proceedings.

3. PROVISIONAL REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET 2007/08

(see item 12 - report 273/06-07 and tabled paper)

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and highlighted that the budget contained:

- Emphasis on fighting crime and anti-social behaviour with the creation of a new Anti-Social Behaviour Team, 21 new Police Community Support Officers and a domestic violence co-ordinator;
- An agenda for young people including a Youth Mayor, prevention of teenage pregnancy and a sports inclusion programme working towards 2012;
- A Council Tax rise below the average annual level of 5%.

He emphasised that the budget had been brought earlier than previously to Council to allow proper scrutiny and to maximise the benefits of proposed growths and savings. He acknowledged that the eligibility criteria was a difficult issue and that there was a proposal for further consultation. He stressed that there had been extensive consultation with the public and a good balance of external assistance that ensured the budget best reflected the views of Lambeth residents.

The Leader of the Council MOVED and it was:

RESOLVED:

(1) That Appendix 8 of Item 12 be classified as information exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

(2) That the discussion on the report be held in the public domain without disclosing any exempt information.

The Executive Director of Finance and Resources explained that this was currently a balanced budget and that feedback from the Scrutiny Committees would be considered before bringing the report back to Cabinet in February. Section 11 of the report sets out the consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and savings could not be enacted until the statutory obligations were completed. There was also consultation to be carried out regarding the voluntary sector. He acknowledged that there were some typographical errors in the report which would be amended, eg. Certain EDCYPS proposals needed to be amended to reflect that no reduction in posts is being proposed and that recommendation 8 had been amended for Cabinet to agree 'in principle'.

EDFR

The Leader of the Opposition (Liberal Democrats) drew attention to table 7 on p114 and proposed that there were budget cuts across all departments and the voluntary sector. He also spoke against the proposal to amend the eligibility criteria requesting that this decision be postponed and that all parties make a joint approach to Central Government for increased funding. He then drew attention to the rise in homecare charges and that the budget was not balanced over the forthcoming four years, predicting a rise in Council Taxes.

The Leader of the Opposition (Conservative Party) supported an all party approach to Central Government as proposed by Councillor Lumsden. He welcomed the early distribution of budget papers and hoped that the process of scrutiny would be respected. He requested that opposition leaders be made aware of all options considered in the disposals programme in the interest of transparency. With regards to 'Adjustment A' he urged the Cabinet to continue representations to Government with the LGA. He expressed concern over the waste relocation costs, increase in leisure charges and parking permits.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture responded on two issues:

- Parking charges – climate change was a serious issue and the new incentive scheme was intended to encourage car owners' sense of responsibility and to consider alternative forms of transport.
- Leisure charges – there was a high rate of dissatisfaction in the Borough with leisure services and that charges had to increase to improve standards. She also pointed to capital growth proposals for Brixton and Clapham which would greatly benefit leisure services in these areas.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety stressed this was an effective budget to fight crime, referring to the new initiatives previously highlighted.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Services explained that there would be continued consultation and discussion with the Government regarding the eligibility criteria and that it was a priority that resources are available to those critically in need. With respect to homecare charges he explained that these were being brought up to the inner London average and no profit was being made from the increase.

The Deputy Leader of the Council highlighted the following corrections to Appendices 1 & 3:

EDFR

- Page 18 (page 418 on published agenda appendices), 7th Savings proposal to read: Area Services - investment efficiencies
- Pages 332-336 (pages 758-762); Member allowances: to be updated to reflect decisions by Council
- Relevant pages: amend to state that proposals concerning the voluntary sector will be subject to consideration in accordance with the voluntary sector compact.

The Deputy Leader further advised that:

- Community safety was the top issue identified when campaigning
- Contracts with the voluntary sector were subject to continued discussion
- The budget would assist in improving efficiencies in the Council

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People stressed the three year programme for young people to increase the range of activities available to them, the creation of multi-agency teams to assist delivery and continuing improvements in schools and the BSF programme.

The Leader of the Council stressed that this budget matched residents' priorities, due to the extensive consultation that had taken place, tackling crime, helping young people and keeping Council Tax as low as possible.

The Cabinet Member for Finance insisted that table 7, as referred to by the Leader of the Opposition, must be read alongside service outcomes and that it was his intention to push for further efficiency savings and achieve real growth in service provision. He assured the opposition that the full disposal options would be made available to them and that he was happy to discuss this with them further. He emphasised that the proposed Capital Programme was honouring priorities developed and met the need for serious investment. He explained that 'Adjustment A' was a complex issue but was subject to continued lobbying and options to free up resources were being

explored.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet note the provisional revenue and capital proposals and agrees subsequently to recommend these to Council, subject to comments received from consultees.
- (2) That Cabinet recommend that Corporate Committee continue to assume a 95% collection rate (of council tax) for the purposes of calculating the council tax base.
- (3) That Cabinet recommend that Corporate Committee maintain the existing policy on council tax discounts (where the council has legal discretion as set out in section 8 of this report).
- (4) That Cabinet agrees the principle of financing the schools' element of the capital programme (excluding capital grants) at the level of the DfES figure for supported capital expenditure for the period 2007/08 to 2011/12, as set out in paragraph 6.12, and notes the notional and actual value of the single capital pot set out at paragraph 6.13 of this report.
- (5) That the Cabinet agrees the proposed amendments to the capital programme (where these merely vire expenditure from one financial year to another) as set out in appendix 6.
- (6) That the Cabinet notes the proposed reductions and deletions to the current capital programme, as set out in appendix 5 and, subject to comments received from consultees, agrees to recommend these to the Council's budget setting meeting on 28 February 2007.
- (7) That the Cabinet notes the proposed additions to the current capital programme, as set out in appendix 6 and, subject to comments received from consultees, agrees to recommend these to the Council's budget setting meeting on 28 February 2007.
- (8) That Cabinet agrees in principle the disposal programme set out in appendix 8 of this report, and the proposed allocation of this between general and housing purposes, and instructs officers to proceed with the disposal for best consideration of the properties set out therein.
- (9) That Cabinet notes that formal amendments to the disposal programme are reserved to the Cabinet, and that officers are mandated to pursue the disposals referred to above unless and until any such formal amendments are made.
- (10) That Cabinet notes that the resources available to finance the capital programme over the period 2007/08 to

2011/12 cannot be known with certainty, and that amendments to the programme will be required over time to reflect changes to the financing.

- (11) That Cabinet notes the high level of disposals required to finance the proposed capital programme and the risks inherently associated with the capital programme as a result.
- (12) That Cabinet agrees the Total Capital Allowance of £16.12m as set out in paragraph 6.14 of this report and notes the implications for the financing of the capital programme.
- (13) That Cabinet notes that the proposed capital programme is balanced over three years but that there is an in-year financing shortfall in the 2008/09 financial year, and instructs officers to propose re-profiling of the schemes in order to balance the shortfall.
- (14) That Cabinet notes the results of the public consultation as set out in section 7 of this report.
- (15) That Cabinet notes the further consultation planned and the timetable for finalisation of the budget.

4. 2007/08 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - BUDGET, RENT AND SERVICE CHARGE SETTING

(see item 9 - report 271/06-07) **(Report 217/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007)**

The Cabinet Member for Housing thanked officers, tenants and leaseholder representatives, Area Forums and Tenants Council for their contributions to the report. He stressed the aim of the proposals were to gain maximum revenue for minimum impact on tenants, and explained the financial background was affected adversely by a poor financial settlement from Government, the Reframing policy and previous imprudent levels of balances. He highlighted:

- The unbundling of service charges from rents – there would be savings of £4m in rent rebate subsidies and this had been generally accepted by area forums. Tenants Council were not fully committed but supported in principle.
- A working group had been set up to cover parking and garage charges and the problems of implementation and fraud. Extra revenue was pledged to reinvest on estates to improve parking and create more garages.
- Parity was sought between TMO allowances and estate offices with figures suggesting a reduction of 35% over the next three years.
- The recommended rent increase from Tenants Council of 3.6% could not be accepted due to loss of revenue and

- subsidy, and 4.99% was the lowest increase possible.
- Tabled modifications to parking permit charges were subject to consultation and garage rents had been reduced to £7.50.

The Executive Director for Regeneration and Housing explained that the proposals broke down into four areas:

- Rents: were currently significantly below the London average and Government formula rent level
- Service charge unbundling would save £4m
- Charges for motorists were being amended to a more appropriate level
- TMO allowances should be equal

Councillor Jeremy Clyne considered that there had been no scrutiny of the proposals and questioned the accuracy of the average rent increase. He believed unbundling produced a flat rate charge on estate properties and challenged the TMO allowance figures in the report.

Councillor Irene Kimm expressed concern for the tenants in respect of reduced services and closed offices. In principle she supported the idea of unbundling but criticised the lack of consultation or scrutiny. She also requested consultation with the TMOs over allowances and questioned that this was a breach of statutory duty and requested assurance there would be no reduction as a result of the paper.

Jean Kerrigan, representing Brixton Area Forum, explained that two area forums had rejected the proposals and asked whether the Government incentive would reduce over following years. She also stressed that the 4.99% increase did not match any increase in tenants' wages and would adversely affect their standard of living. She was not confident in the figures and questioned whether stock number changes would have a negative effect.

Mark Browne, of Roupell Park Estate, claimed the statutory right of negotiation had not been recognised, and that this should begin once residents receive the relevant information. He also asked that the previously responsible officer for this area be included in further talks.

The Executive Director for Regeneration and Housing responded:

- TMO Allowance: there was a commitment to modular management and the three month negotiation period and that the figures in the report had been set down for parity
- Discussions with TMO's had begun to look at the detail and appropriate officers would be involved.
- De-pooling would allow tenants to challenge services which would be listed clearly and separately in billing
- Savings would have to be sought elsewhere if de-pooling

did not occur

The Divisional Director of Resources (Housing) commented that if changes in stock numbers breach limits then substantial losses can be incurred, but current estimates suggest it would be highly advantageous and that recalculation threshold should be achieved with the Stockwell Park transfer. This would be kept under review.

The Cabinet Member for Housing explained that:

- He was committed to the scrutiny process a meeting had been convened before Christmas but cancelled as it was inquorate
- He was committed to partnership working - discussions with TMOs were ongoing to reconcile differences
- Service charge unbundling was substantially supported by three Area Forums and that this would draw in extra funds from Government. It would improve the ability to challenge services and the ultimate intention was for tenants to have the same right of rebate as leaseholders.

The Leader of the Council gave a commitment that negotiation would take place with full access to figures.

Amendments to the recommendations were MOVED and it was

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the proposed HRA Budget as shown within the report is agreed.
- (2) That TMO allowances are reviewed to ensure parity and harmonised over the next three years.
- (3) (a) That rents and service charges are increased in accordance with rent restructuring guidelines, an average of 4.99%.
(b) That no service charge is made for parking enforcement but that the remaining service charges set out in Appendix 9 are depooled.
(c) That existing service charges are increased by 3.6% for 2007-8, and that the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing carries out a full review of these charges during 2007-8 in order to implement charges that reflect the full cost of eligible services in 2008-9.
- (4) That, subject to consultation, the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing be given delegated authority to introduce a resident's parking permit charge of £25 on all estates, and a 50p (pro-rata) maximum daily charge for visitors. The implementation timetable and the administrative arrangements to be determined by the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing.
- (5) That, subject to consultation, the Executive Director of

Regeneration and Housing be given delegated authority to introduce from April 2007 a garage rental of £7.50 a week for tenants and leaseholders and a £30 a week charge for other lessees. The implementation timetable and the administrative arrangements to be determined by the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing.

- (6) That heating charges be increased in line with inflation as set out in paragraph 11.
- (7) That service charges should no longer be levied on freeholders that do not receive services.
- (8) That Cabinet notes the existing policy whereby registered disabled tenants or leaseholders are eligible for one garage at nil rental.

5. REVIEW OF COUNCIL WARDENS SERVICES

(see item 4 - report 265/06-07) **(Report 265/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007)**

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety explained that this was an opportunity to reshape the patrolling presence on Lambeth's streets to provide value for money, appropriate enforcement powers and a service fit for purpose. He explained that rolling out the Warden scheme across the borough was unsustainable and the recommendation was to end the scheme and replace them with 21 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who have greater enforcement powers. A range of options had been considered and this recommendation was supported by the Borough Police Commander. The recommended option would resolve issues of accountability, tasking and hours of employment. The community engagement by the existing wardens was recognised as being valuable and the Cabinet Member thanked them for their work.

The Executive Director for Environment, Culture and Community Safety confirmed that the Council were seeking to influence the role and tasking of PCSOs and obtain a guarantee that they would not be withdrawn from the Borough.

The Leader of the Opposition suggested an alternative proposal:

- Retain the existing wardens
- Work with the existing PCSOs
- Introduce new police constables, paid by the Council, under local governance

He suggested that the PCSOs had no greater powers than the wardens who worked well with the diverse community. He also criticised the lack of consultation and that there would be no service level agreement on the PCSOs.

Councillor Darren Sanders stressed that the cross party scrutiny commission had not yet reported on the issue. He also suggested

that different approaches were required in different areas of the borough and that highlighted the warden organised football event as successfully reducing crime at the time.

Councillor Graham Pycock asked what discussions had taken place with the police to coordinate wardens with the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and suggested there had been a lack of policy from the new administration over the last eight months. He expressed concern over negative remarks made by Cabinet Members publicly regarding the warden service and also asked for the decision to be postponed until the results of the scrutiny commission were delivered.

Gillian Tyson, representing Babington Road residents, explained that the warden scheme had vastly improved her local situation, that they had valuable people skills that the police could not emulate, although she agreed there was a need for enforcement as well. She asked for postponement of the decision to allow for proper consultation.

Jack Boles, Chair of Streatham Crime Working Group and St. Leonards Residents Association criticised the lack of consultation and questioned the oversight of the proposed PCSOs. He also questioned who would take up the other duties of wardens such as environmental surveys. He suggested the wardens' lack of enforcement powers was actually a great benefit as it made them approachable.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People suggested that organised activities for youths were an excellent idea but could be better carried out by youth workers and sports coaches. She also commented on the lack of presence of wardens in her area.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety described the Leader of the Opposition's proposal as unsustainable and that the timescale of the report was meeting previously set targets. He explained the review had been conducted over the past eight months and that the agreement of police was being sought for a joint system of governance.

The Leader of the Council emphasised that the recommendations were in line with the expert opinion of the police and that investment was being made in youth services.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, in principle, the Council diverts resources allocated to those current warden schemes funded by the General Fund and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund into other methods of achieving safer communities.
- (2) That the current warden schemes are ceased with effect from

1 April 2007, with the exception of the South Bank Wardens.

- (3) That the Executive Director for Housing and Regeneration works with the Cabinet Member for Housing to consider the future of the HRA funded scheme in light of the decision to move away from a council wide warden scheme, including the consultation of tenants.
- (4) That the Executive Director of Environment, Culture and Community Safety, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, negotiates with the Metropolitan Police, the provision of additional Police Community Support Officers.
- (5) That the Executive Director of Environment, Culture and Community Safety works with other colleagues to determine ways to continue the positive initiatives started by the wardens schemes.
- (6) That this report is referred to the Local Strategic Partnership Executive for consideration of how unused Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for this year and next year could be re-allocated

6. GLA LONDON UNITED EVENT REQUEST

(see item 13 - report 275/06-07)

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture explained that RISE was a free music festival and in 2007 would coincide with bi-centennial celebrations of the abolition of the slave trade. The Mayor of London had approached Lambeth to host this event and a motion moved at Council by Councillor Wellbelove had received cross party support. The festival would raise awareness but would also contravene key elements of Lambeth's event strategy. She stressed this would be exceptional and not set a precedent for future events.

Anna Jefferson Smith, representing the Clapham Society, expressed concerns about the event:

- There had not been time for consultation
- There would be significant environmental impact
- The numbers of attendees was unpredictable
- The platforms at Clapham tube stations would be unsafe given the likely size of the crowds
- Sports areas would be affected by the size of the event

She requested guarantees that the Common must be restored after the event, that future events conform to the events strategy and suggested that there be collections on site for anti-slavery charities

Councillor Helen O'Malley expressed:

- Her commitment to involvement in the celebrations and that it was appropriate to take place in Clapham because

- of its history in the anti-slavery movement
- That public security must be taken seriously
- That park officers be supported in preserving the Common and the restoration of damage monitored
- There needed to be a minimum time set between events

Councillor Darren Sanders supported the event and the appropriate location and requested that future events are required to be carbon neutral.

Councillor Clare Whelan supported the event but expressed concerns over safety issues, particularly around the tube platforms. She suggested an agreement be reached with the Mayor of London regarding reparations and that an amendment be tabled to scale down the event and that future events be adjusted accordingly.

The Chair of the Friends of Clapham Common expressed concern over potential environmental damage and the need for a proper restoration policy.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture advised that representations on safety issues should be made when the event came before the Licensing Committee. A robust agreement would be secured with the GLA regarding environmental damage and deposit withheld if necessary. The events strategy was currently being refreshed and appropriate time lapses between events would be built in. She also gave her support to charity collections on site for anti-slavery charities and was happy to meet with concerned parties to discuss concerns in more detail.

RESOLVED:

- (1) Cabinet gives approval for “Rise” to take place on Clapham Common in July 2007.

7. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE OF ADULTS' AND COMMUNITY SERVICES (SOCIAL CARE)

(see item 16 - report 266/06-07)

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Services thanked staff and his predecessor for improvements in the service that had achieved the two star rating.

The Leader of the Council MOVED and it was **RESOLVED:**

That the guillotine to be extended by up to one hour for the remainder of business.

The Divisional Director of Resources (Adults and Community Services) explained that the paper had been presented on a

statutory basis for Cabinet acceptance and that the CSCI judgement should be welcomed.

Councillor Roger Giess thanked officers for their work and suggested that this was an area not necessarily rated as a priority in public consultation and that the changes to eligibility criteria were misconceived. Ebenezer Akinsanni, on behalf of the Disabled Advisory Services in Lambeth proposed that savings be ring fenced for the vulnerable. Mary Roberts, representing service users, expressed concern over the resources available to mental health patients especially with the proposed closure of the Maudesley facilities.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Services had listened to the concerns and stressed that their goal was to make individuals more independent and put resources in residents' control. He insisted consultation would continue to ensure the right people were receiving services and that the range of options had to be considered due to financial pressures.

The Leader of the Council congratulated staff and Councillors, past and present, on the improvement in services.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet notes The Annual Review of Performance and subsequent "star rating" for Adult and Community Services by the Commission of Social Care Inspection (CSCI)

8. LAMBETH HATE CRIME STRATEGY

(see item 3 - report 264/06-07) **(Report 264/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007)**

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety highlighted that Lambeth was one of the first Boroughs to draw up a hate crime strategy on this scale. The Community Safety Manager stressed the importance of community engagement in the strategy and that annual reports would be made to Cabinet to monitor delivery.

Councillor Darren Sanders welcomed the strategy and asked that officers look to other Councils who had implemented similar schemes such as the London Boroughs of Richmond Upon Thames and Waltham Forest. He requested focus on mystery shopping, more intervention to deal with perpetrators and that reductions are also targeted.

Councillor Christopher Wellbelove emphasised the need for strong support from all directorates and that there is a programme of appropriate training for all staff.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety explained that

increased awareness should necessitate a decrease in hate crime over time and accepted the Councillor's suggestion of mystery shopping.

EDECCS

The Leader of the Council congratulated the Community Safety Team on their work.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the draft Policy Statement on Hate Crime be approved (Appendix 1).
- (2) That the Council's contribution to a Lambeth Hate Crime Strategy 2007-2010 and Action Plan be approved (Appendix 2).
- (3) That Cabinet note that the Hate Crime Strategy will be submitted to the Safer Lambeth Partnership Board at its meeting on 23rd January, 2007.
- (4) That Cabinet receive annual progress reports on the delivery of the Action Plan.

9. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

(see item 11 - report 274/06-07) **(Report 274/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007)**

The Deputy Leader of the Council explained that the Local Area Agreement (LAA) was a means for departments to work more effectively with partners. She thanked officers and partners for their contributions and in particular Councillor Rachel Heywood.

The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Inclusion confirmed that the agreement focussed on social inclusion and that the agreement could be renewed each year to feed in further content.

The Leader of the Opposition suggested further areas for consideration when the agreement was next renewed:

- Environment: traffic and climate change
- Isolation in the community and the positive impact of population change
- Health and lifestyle of residents

The Leader of the Council agreed that there was a role in its future development for both the opposition and Overview and Scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

- (1) Cabinet notes the progress on refining the LAA outcomes framework and stretch targets and endorses the November 2006 submission to GOL.

- (2) Cabinet notes the recommendation taken to the LSP Executive on 30th November in respect of Stretch targets and endorses that recommendation.
- (3) Cabinet notes that it will receive an updated version of the LAA in an informal Cabinet meeting to be arranged, before the 26th of January 2007 submission. (*18th of January*)- to be confirmed.
- (4) Cabinet confirms the LSP delegation of executive authority to the LSP Chair and to Lambeth's Chief Executive to approve final submissions of the LAA on 26th January 2007.

10. **INTERMEDIATE WORKS - LAMBETH BSF PROGRAMME**

(see item 5 - report 268/06-07) **(Report 268/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007)**

The Leader of the Council advised that items 5 and 6 be taken together and that Item 6 should be classified as a non-key decision.

Councillor Clare Whelan requested assurance that the work in schools met sustainability standards as set in the Unitary Development Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People explained that a discussion paper and seminar on sustainability were currently being prepared.

The Executive Director for Children and Young Peoples Services explained that sustainability requirements could be met with the construction of new schools but was more problematic when refurbishing existing facilities. Commitments would be met over the entirety of the programme.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the criteria for the Intermediate Works set out in the Executive Summary be agreed.
- (2) That the Intermediate Works, and initially preparatory works including designs and surveys, be progressed to enable works to commence in July 2007.
- (3) That Cabinet delegate to EDCYPS, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, finalisation of the scope of works.
- (4) That Cabinet delegate to EDCYPS procurement of the necessary consultants, services and contractors to implement the works.

11. BSF - START ON SITE OF CONTRACTORS FOR ELMCOURT, MICHAEL TIPPETT, PARK CAMPUS AND INTERIM ELMGREEN

(see item 6 - report 267/06-07 and tabled paper)

RESOLVED:

(1) That Cabinet note the content of the report.

12. DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME 2006-2009

(see item 7 - report 263/06-07) **(Report 263/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007)**

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Inclusion and Tackling Poverty introduced the report as Lambeth's first disability scheme and that work was progressing on building this into Lambeth services. She thanked officers for their work.

The Executive Director for Strategy and Corporate Services explained that the scheme would be kept under regular review and further enhancements considered.

The Leader of the Opposition (Liberal Democrats) noted that scrutiny would examine whether further resources were required.

RESOLVED:

(1) That Cabinet agrees the Disability Equality Scheme

13. SOCIAL HOMEBUY - EXPANDING THE OPTIONS TO OWN

(see item 8 - report 270/06-07) **(Report 270/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007)**

The Cabinet Member for Housing explained that this was a pilot to increase opportunity for tenants to buy property and that it was similar to the rent to mortgage scheme but prevented sub-letting. Council would retain 100% of the capital receipts.

Councillor Jeremy Clyne criticised the fact that this issue had not come before scrutiny or been subject to consultation. He suggested that there had been a low take up of other pilot schemes and that 25% was a high starting point. He also noted that the discount only applied to the first percentage bought. He was concerned that proceeds were not ring fenced for housing and over the loss of social housing the scheme would entail.

Rita Fitzgerald, tenant, criticised the lack of consultation and posed a series of questions:

- How was it possible to buy a home that was not a tenants existing property?

- How long would the sub-let clause last?
- Can the leaseholder be forced to sell back to the Council?
- How much of the proceeds would be ring fenced?
- Where was the subsidy raised?
- How would the five year payback on the discount work?

She also expressed concern over the selection of properties to be sold and which would remain for those tenants unable to take up the scheme. She requested the paper be brought to Tenants Council.

The Divisional Director of Regeneration and Housing explained that the pilot scheme was to run until 2008 when the scheme was expected to roll out nationally. The scheme would extend opportunities to tenants unable to take advantage of the 'right to buy' scheme. She further confirmed that:

- The discount only applied to the first percentage purchased
- It was expected that tenants buy their own properties but that may depend on allocation need in which case larger or smaller properties might be sought.
- There were currently 80 interested residents
- As this was only a pilot scheme, consultation was not necessary as its intention was to assess interest in the scheme.
- Receipts would be retained by Council and rules governing reinvestment were set out in clause 2.13 of the report.
- Subsidies in rent would be available through the Government scheme.
- The issue would be discussed at both Tenants Council and Area Forums.

The Leader of the Opposition (Liberal Democrats) requested that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services advise on clause 2.13 and whether there was an issue with the restrictions. He asked that there be a guarantee that reinvestment would be restricted to affordable housing.

DLDS

The Director confirmed he would respond in writing and copy in Councillors Steve Reed, John Kazantzis and Jeremy Clyne.

The Cabinet Member for Housing would welcome the issue being discussed at Area Forums and with scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Cabinet approve the Councils application to the Secretary of State for section 32 consent to dispose of properties under Social Homebuy terms and run a pilot Social HomeBuy scheme concluding on the 31 March 2008.

14. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCRUTINY COMMISSION REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

(see item 10 - report 272/06-07) (**Report 272/06-07 in a Key decision – call-in period ends 5pm, Friday 19th January 2007**)

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Inclusion and Tackling Poverty thanked the Councillors on the scrutiny commission and added that work had already begun on the recommendations.

The Leader of the Council and Leader of the Opposition (Liberal Democrats) added their thanks to the commission.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet endorses the findings of the Equality and Diversity Scrutiny Commission
- (2) That Cabinet agrees the action plan

15. LAMBETH REVENUE AND BENEFITS 2009 VISION

(see item 14 - report 269/06-07)

The Cabinet Member for Finance confirmed the service had been greatly improved with a three star CPA rating, but that improvements were to be pursued under the direction of the new Divisional. The Deputy Leader of the Council welcomed the reference to effective partnerships and stressed the importance of this with regards to the Post Office and Credit Union.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet endorse and approve the Revenue & Benefits Vision

16. REFERENCE FROM STREATHAM AREA COMMITTEE (29.11.06): STREATHAM LIBRARY

(see item 15 - report 261/06-07)

Councillor Julian Heather expressed a common understanding that the Borough's libraries needed improvement and outlined the outcomes of the survey on Streatham Tate Library commissioned by the Streatham Area Committee. He requested Cabinet consider funding a new library to treble the use of space and create an arts space on the top floor, that no cuts be made to the library service and that capital investment be put aside for future years.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture agreed there was a borough-wide challenge to improve the state of the libraries and increase usage. She confirmed a review had been instigated in

October 2006 that was due to complete this month. The Area Committee's request would be considered alongside the results of this review.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet considers the request of the Streatham Area Committee that consultation be carried out and resources identified to enable the current library to be replaced with a new library and performance space.

17. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 9.50 pm

CHAIR
CABINET
Thursday, 8th February, 2007

Date of Despatch: Friday, 12 January 2007

Call-in Date: Friday, 19 January 2007

Contact for Enquiries: Timothy Whiteley

Tel: (020) 7926 2754

Fax: (020) 7926 2755

E-mail: TStephens@lambeth.gov.uk

Web: www.lambeth.gov.uk