

Public Accounts Select Committee		
Title	Budget cuts	
Contributor	Sustainable Development Select Committee	Item 4
Class	Part 1 (open)	24 September 2019

## 1. Purpose

1.1. This report informs Public Accounts Select Committee of the views of the Sustainable Development Select Committee arising from discussions held on the budget cuts report at the Committee's meeting on 11 September 2019.

## 2. Recommendation

2.1. As part of its overall consideration of the budget cuts, Public Accounts Select Committee is asked to consider the views of the Sustainable Development Select Committee - as set out in this referral.

## 3. Sustainable Development Select Committee views

3.1. At its meeting on 11 September 2019, the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered the budget cuts report. In particular, it reviewed a proposal to cut the budget for the environment division (CUS07, reduction in street sweeping) – which would involve the reduction in the frequency of residential street sweeping from the current once a week to once a fortnight. It has been suggested that this be achieved through a major restructuring of the service that would lead to the loss of around 30-40 fulltime staff (from a current headcount of 132 staff).

3.2. Following consideration of the report and answers to the Committee's questions from officers, Sustainable Development Select Committee resolved to refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet, via Public Accounts Select Committee, as set out below.

3.3. The Committee is concerned about the negative impact of this cut. As previously stated, it is apprehensive about the progressive deterioration of the cleanliness of Lewisham's streets - as well as the perception by residents of the Council's ability to carry out its basic functions.

3.4. The Committee wants to know whether a balance can be found between making cuts to the service and maintaining a reasonable quality of provision. It would welcome more detailed information about the potential for a complete reorganisation of the service - as well as the impact of making different levels of cuts on a sliding scale.

- 3.5. The Committee also wants to better understand the types (and cost) of mitigating actions that might be put in place to deal with the impact of this cut. This includes – but is not limited to – the potential for using machinery and other innovations for responsive cleansing.
- 3.6. The Committee believes that further proactive, coordinated and robust support should be provided by the Council’s communications team to make Lewisham residents aware of the reasons for making cuts. Moreover, Members believe that there should be a wider campaign by the Council to encourage civic pride in Lewisham (with the concurrent ambition of encouraging people to take pride in the cleanliness of their streets). It believes that this should incorporate support for schools to encourage and engage children and young people. This campaign could also include work to encourage take away and fast food operations to keep the areas near their shops tidy.
- 3.7. In summary, the Committee recommends that Mayor and Cabinet should give further detailed consideration to the issues raised in this referral in advance of implementing this cut.

#### **4. Further implications**

- 4.1. There are no direct financial, legal, environmental, equalities or crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendation in this report. However, there may be implications arising from the implementation of the Committee’s recommendations.

#### **Background papers**

Sustainable Development Select Committee agenda 11 September 2019:

<https://tinyurl.com/sdsc110919>

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