

# Our Lewisham, our say

## Dear resident



You have entrusted me with the leadership of our borough at a crucial time. It is a privilege and a great honour to do so. The country faces huge financial challenges. We face them too here in Lewisham. I want to ask you to join me in tackling those challenges to ensure that

together we protect the most vulnerable, build on the strengths of our communities and continue to make Lewisham a place where we are all proud to live.

The new Government has made it clear that cutting public spending is the main way in which it intends to reduce the public deficit. It has already cut grants to Lewisham that were expected this year by at least £2.7million. Further, much bigger cuts will inevitably follow.

Over the last three years we have saved around £26 million by cutting waste and becoming more and more efficient. We will continue to do that, but the sums we will need to save over the next three years are way beyond what we could ever do by trimming a bit here and doing things a bit smarter there. We also need to fundamentally change the way we deliver our public services – if we don't the impact on many in our community could be severe.

As well as being users of public services, many of you may work for the public services in Lewisham or elsewhere in London or you may have friends or family who do. In fact, more than one in three people of the working population in Lewisham work in one of the public services. Job losses are inevitable as the cuts begin to bite. So deciding how to reduce our budget will not be easy. And I will not make decisions without first listening to you.

Over the coming weeks I want you to have your say in

**Over the last three years we have saved around £26 million by cutting waste and becoming more and more efficient**

Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham

**I will not make decisions without first listening to you**

Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham

how we will face the challenges ahead. I want to know from you:

- ◆ What Council services you value most
- ◆ What you think the Council could do less of
- ◆ Where you think you and your friends, family and neighbours could help each other more to improve your area to ease the pressure on public services.

There are some fundamental challenges that we must continue to focus on despite reduced resources. These include:

- ◆ To strive to protect those in our community with the greatest needs
- ◆ To ensure our young people don't lose out, through lack of education and training, jobs or housing
- ◆ To pursue an ambitious target of being more efficient and less wasteful in our use of energy
- ◆ To work to make sure that tolerance and respect continue to flourish in our community.

I know many of you will have really valuable ideas to contribute during this process. I will make sure you have the opportunity to put forward those ideas, through our website, at community meetings and at events around the borough. We will publish details of our programme, which we are calling Our Lewisham, Our Say, on our website and in the local papers. You can also sign up to get regular news and information on this, and other Council business, direct to your email inbox.

I very much look forward to hearing your ideas.

Yours sincerely

**Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham**

**SIGN UP TO THE COUNCIL NEWS E-BULLETIN AT [WWW.LEWISHAM.GOV.UK/NEWSANDEVENTS](http://WWW.LEWISHAM.GOV.UK/NEWSANDEVENTS)**