



**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY  
ORDINARY MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 6 2006**

**SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA No. 1**

<b>List of Contents</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>Item No.</b>		<b>No.</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>MOTIONS – COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF OFFICER</b>	<b>1</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Business Opportunities for Former Council Officers and Executive Members</b></li><li>• <b>Newington Reference Library</b></li><li>• <b>Roll of Honour</b></li></ul>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>LATE MOTION – BICENTENARY OF THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE</b>	<b>6</b>

**NOTE:** Please note that the above reports have not been circulated seven clear working days in advance of the meeting (council procedure rule 1.2 (1)). Therefore, in accordance with access to information procedure rule (5), the Mayor will be asked to accept the items as late and urgent.

Circulated: Tuesday, November 28 2006

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<b>Item No.</b> 10.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> December 6 2006	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Motions	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Chief Executive (Acting Borough Solicitor)	

**4. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JENNY JONES** (seconded by Councillor Peter John)

Please note that, in accordance with council assembly procedure rule 3.10(3), council assembly shall consider this motion.

**Business Opportunities for Former Council Officers and Executive Members**

That council assembly believes that senior officers and executive members ought to have the freedom to take up business opportunities after serving the council, when it does not undermine the public interest or integrity of the council, or give cause for any suspicion of impropriety.

In particular, public confidence in the workings of the council require:

- that any suspicion that advice or decisions might be influenced by the hope or expectation of future employment with a particular firm or organisation be avoided
- that there is no risk that a particular firm might gain an improper advantage over its competitors by employing someone who has had, in the course of their official duties, access to information or individuals which may affect that firm or its competitors

Council assembly requests officers to draft rules covering the appointments of senior officers and executive members which address the above concerns. These draft rules should then be placed before the appropriate decision making bodies. The executive to consider applying this to all future senior officer appointments. The standards committee and council assembly to consider applying the rules to future executive members.

**Comments of the Acting Borough Solicitor**

The code of conduct relating to councillors issued by the Secretary of State under Section 49 of the Local Government Act 2000 only applies whilst a person remains a councillor of the authority. It is doubtful that the council could seek to regulate the conduct of former councillors who are no longer members of the authority when the Local Government Act 2000 does not do so, but should this motion be passed specialist legal advice will be given to the executive.

The recent Local Government White Paper states that the government will establish an independent review of the incentives and barriers to serving on councils. Any proposals that the council might wish to take forward would need to take account of any recommendations of this independent review.

With regard to employees of the council, the council's employee code does apply but only as long as they remain in the employment of the council. It might be possible to require officers to accept a contract of employment which places restrictions on them taking up certain types of employment once they have left the council, but again, specialist legal advice will need to be given to the executive on this matter.

However, both former councillors and employees are bound by the common law duty of confidence in that they must obtain the consent of the council to make use of or disclose confidential information which the former councillor or employee obtained whilst associated with the council.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the executive and standards committee for consideration.

**6. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR KIRSTY McNEILL** (seconded by Councillor Martin Seaton)

Please note that, in accordance with council assembly procedure rule 3.10(3), council assembly shall consider this motion.

**Newington Reference Library**

Council assembly notes plans to shut Newington reference library as part of its libraries modernisation plan.

Council assembly believes the Disability Discrimination Act is an excellent piece of legislation and compliance with it should be a top priority for Southwark. Council further believes that the whole community should be involved in open discussions, with full access to all relevant information, about how compliance with the legislation will impact on council services.

Council assembly believes that the Newington reference library provides an incredibly popular local service, providing newspapers, magazines, computers, internet access, books and experienced reference staff in a serious and studious environment.

Council assembly notes the very popular community campaign to save and make accessible the Newington reference library and congratulates its organisers on their vigorous engagement with local decision making.

Council assembly notes the very high number of signatures on the community petition to save the library and make it accessible, and the unanimous opposition to the closure plans from tenant and resident's associations (TRAs) represented in the East Walworth area housing forum.

Council assembly notes that on two occasions the Walworth community council has expressed its strong opposition to the proposed closure and its firm desire to see the council explore, in full, every possible option for rendering the library accessible without significant loss of service.

Council assembly believes that consultation on these proposals has been consistently poor, including:

- that the initial consultation consisted of a users survey on one day in the school and university vacations, thereby excluding the large number of people who use the library to help with their formal education
- that the plans for use of the downstairs space, and tours of that space, were only made available to the public after strong representations by Labour councillors and demands from the community council
- that the members of the community who went on subsequent tours were not offered the chance to fill in talkback forms
- that Walworth community council's 'Take Note' claimed that TRAs had been written to about the plans, but that a straw poll taken at the next Community Council indicated that not a single TRA present had been consulted.

Council assembly therefore requests that the executive agree a libraries modernisation plan which secures a future for Newington reference library in which the service can be maintained in full and made accessible to all. Council assembly further requests that the Campaign to Save Newington Library and other interested parties be given full access to information on all the options considered and rejected by the executive member.

### **Comments of the Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure**

There are no plans to close the reference service at Newington Library. It is proposed to relocate the service to the ground floor of the library. This will enable the council to meet its statutory obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, and more importantly enable all of Southwark's residents to access this service.

The user survey carried out in the summer was undertaken over a period of two weeks, with additional staff timetabled to distribute forms to ensure that responses were maximised and that staff delivering the service were not interrupted in their duties. Almost 200 responses were received.

Members of the community participating on tours of the proposed downstairs space were given access to talkback forms, which are freely available at all times in all Southwark Libraries. In addition to this, officers leading the tours took detailed notes of the issues, concerns and comments of participants, in order that they could be fed into the individual decision making report. Indeed, an update on those concerns and proposals for addressing them was given at the Walworth community council on November 13 2006.

Following the community council meeting of November 13 2006, all Walworth tenants and resident associations were again written to and invited to submit their views on the proposals for relocating the service to

the ground floor. Responses will be taken into consideration when a decision is made and in determining the shape of future service provision.

In addition to this, the plans for the relocation have been made available in the library, have been posted on the council's website and have also appeared on the website of Libraries for Londoners for Life, widening the opportunity for feedback from people unable to attend tours or meetings. Furthermore, both the leader of the council and the executive member for culture, leisure and sport attended a public meeting on November 6 to listen to comments and concerns and to answer questions on the proposals. The executive member also attended the October meeting of the Walworth community council.

It is important to note that Southwark Disablement Association is supportive of the proposals to make the reference library accessible by moving it to the ground floor and that this support has been given at both the public meeting on November 6 and in writing to the local press.

The proposals for the reference library will secure a future for the service, making it fully accessible with sustained access to book stock in addition to delivering additional study seating, extra opening hours and enhanced information technologies. In addition to this, plans are being developed for a possible new library at Elephant and Castle which will enable local people to access much improved services including cutting edge reference and information provision. Investing £400,000 in the provision of a lift in the current building does not represent good value for money given the proposal for a new library.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the executive for consideration.

**7. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DANNY McCARTHY** (seconded by Councillor Paul Bates)

Please note that, in accordance with council assembly procedure rule 3.10(3), council assembly shall consider this motion.

**Roll of Honour**

That following repeated requests to have a roll of honour of past councillors, council agrees to have a roll of honour in the council chamber and, when necessary, the committee rooms.

Council therefore calls upon the chief executive to have plans drawn up for consideration by the executive, and further calls upon the chief executive to obtain three competitive quotes to enable the executive to ensure value for money when awarding a contract.

**Comments of the Head of Democratic Services**

Although no formal request has previously been made it would be possible to look into the provision of a suitable roll of honour in the chamber. Currently the only roll maintained is the list of past Mayors which is located on the first floor of the town hall outside the Mayor's parlour. This motion

calls for a roll of honour to be placed in the council chamber listing past councillors.

Members would need to agree the period that this would cover and logically this would be from when Southwark Council was formed, rather than the earlier Metropolitan Boroughs. Similarly members will need to indicate a preferred option of either wall plaques or an enclosed book. A plaque is likely to be quite large and its aesthetic impact on the chamber will need to be considered. Both options would have initial and maintenance costs, neither of which is currently budgeted. The cost of the new Mayoral roll of honour in 2004 was £1,700. If council assembly agrees this motion, the executive would be asked to consider any issues regarding options and funding.

If agreed, officers would propose consulting the constitutional steering group to seek further clarification on the scope of the roll of honour in the council chamber.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the executive for consideration.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Member Motions	Town Hall Peckham Road London SE5 8UB	Constitutional Team 020 7525 7228

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Team Manager
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	28.11.06

<b>Item No.</b> 11.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> December 6 2006	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Late Motion - Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Chief Executive (Acting Borough Solicitor)	

**Notes:**

1. The motion below was received after the deadline for receipt of members' motions on notice. A procedural motion will need to be moved and seconded at the meeting to allow for council assembly procedure rule 3.10 (1) (deadline for receipt of members' motions), to be waived in order for the motion to be debated.
2. If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the executive for consideration.

**Moved:** Councillor Althea Smith

**Seconded:** Councillors: Tayo Situ

**Late Motion - Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade**

March 25 2007 will mark the 200th year of the abolition of the slave trade by an Act of Parliament in the then British Empire. This was achieved by activists both black and white people, such as Olaudah Equiano, a former slave and William Wilberforce, MP for Hull, all working together towards a common goal.

Mindful of the significance of the transatlantic slave trade to many Southwark residents, many of whom can trace their ancestry to victims of this inhuman trade, Southwark should be at the forefront of celebrating and commemorating this historic occasion.

Therefore council assembly requests the executive to:-

Urgently convene a cross-party working group of members, faith groups, community and voluntary groups and council officers to work up a plan for a year long series of events to commemorate this occasion.

**Reason for urgency**

The motion is time sensitive in that members are requesting that an all-party group be established as urgently as possible to begin work on commemorative events to mark this important event. Delaying this to a future council assembly would impede that work.

**Comments of the Interim Assistant Chief Executive**

To follow.