

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 9 th September 2003	MEETING NAME Executive
Report title:		Motion Submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.9 – Lowering of Voting Age	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Chief Executive (Borough Solicitor & Secretary)	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Executive consider the motion as set out in paragraph 2 below.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. At the Council Assembly meeting on 23rd July 2003 a motion was submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.9 (1) by Councillor Richard Porter and seconded by Councillor Jonathan Hunt. The motion was subsequently amended and referred to the Executive for consideration:-

That Council

Notes:

1. *That 16 and 17 year olds may leave school, get married, join the armed forces and are liable to taxes as other adults but may not vote for the MPs, councillors or other offices who legislate on these subjects.*
2. *That while 18 year olds can sit on a jury or be tried in an adult court, they do not have the opportunity to stand for election to their local council.*
3. *That the introduction of citizenship education onto the curriculum in schools in this Council's area in September 2002 will lead to 16 year olds having a greater knowledge of political affairs than most adults and yet no way of expressing their knowledge through the ballot box.*
4. *That after leaving school at 16, young people might have to wait up to seven years to cast a vote in a general election and six years in a council election.*

Believes:

1. *That not allowing sixteen and seventeen year olds to vote increases their detachment from the democratic structures and from society as a whole, meaning they are less likely to vote when they get the chance and they will be less active members of society in later life.*
2. *That society has moved on to the extent that 16 year olds are nowadays adults.*
3. *That this should be reflected in the age at which people should be allowed to vote in public elections.*
4. *That the arguments for lowering the age at which people can stand as a candidate for public office to 18 are similarly compelling.*

Resolves:

- 1. To support the campaign for the voting age to be lowered to 16 and for the right to stand in local elections to be lowered to 18.*
- 2. To encourage our local MPs to back moves towards lowering the voting age and the age for standing as a candidate for public office.*
- 3. To host an event to boost support for the campaign among young people, the media and the general public in this area.*

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.9 (3), the above motion was referred to the Executive, which shall report upon the outcome of their deliberations upon the motion to the next meeting of Council Assembly.
4. The constitution allocates particular responsibility for functions to Council Assembly, for approving the budget and policy framework, and to the Executive, for developing and implementing the budget and policy framework and overseeing the running of Council services on a day-to-day basis
5. Any key issues, policy or funding implications are included in the advice from the Borough Solicitor & Secretary.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

COMMENTS FROM THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR & SECRETARY

Any efforts to encourage better participation by young people in the democratic process are to be welcomed. To achieve a lowering of the age for voting would require amendments to The Representation of the People Act 1983.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 3.9 (1).	Town Hall, Peckham Road, London. SE5 8UB	Kevin Flaherty Constitutional Team 020 7525 7236

APPENDIX A

Audit Trail

Lead Officer	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Team Manager	
Report Author	Kevin Flaherty, Constitutional Team	
Version	Final	
Dated	30th July 2003	
Key Decision?		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Chief Officer	Yes	Yes
Executive Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services	30th July 2003	