

# Council Assembly

Wednesday 10 July 2013

7.00 pm

Walworth Academy, 34 - 40 Shorncliffe Road, SE1 5UJ.

## Supplemental Agenda

### List of Contents

Item No.	Title	Page No.
2.3.	<b>Deputation Requests on the Theme - Welfare Reform</b> Four deputation requests are listed in paragraph 3 of the report. This report includes details of the four deputation requests on the themed debate.	1 - 3
3.	<b>Themed Debate</b> Community views.	4 - 5
4.	<b>Other Deputation Requests</b> One deputation request is listed in this report. This report includes details of a deputation request not related to the themed debate.	6 - 7
7.1.	<b>Fairer Future Annual Performance Report 2012/13</b> Questions on report.	8 - 9
8.1.	<b>Gambling Act 2005 - Southwark Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2013 - 2016</b> Question on report.	10
8.3.	<b>Constitutional Review 2013/14</b> Question on report.	11

### Contact

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[andrew.weir@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.weir@southwark.gov.uk); [constitutional.team@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:constitutional.team@southwark.gov.uk)  
Webpage: <http://www.southwark.gov.uk>

Date: 8 July 2013

# Agenda Item 2.3

<b>Item No.</b> 2.3	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 10 July 2013	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Deputation Requests on the Theme – Welfare Reform	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That council assembly notes the deputation requests received for consideration by this meeting as listed in paragraph 3 of the report.
2. That council assembly considers whether or not to hear a deputation from the three groups listed in paragraph 8 of the report.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Deputations received for this meeting

3. The following deputation requests have been received by the deadline for consideration by this meeting and they are listed in the order received below:
  1. Southwark Group of Tenants (SGTO)
  2. Southwark Legal Advice Network
  3. Cambridge House
  4. Southwark Trades Council
4. The details for the deputations on the themed debate are set out in this report. The details of the other deputation are set out in item 4.

### Procedure at the meeting

5. The council assembly procedure rule 2.6 (11) states that no more than three deputations shall be considered at any one meeting, and deputations shall be considered in the order of receipt. However the meeting can decide to suspend this rule in order to hear more or vary the order.
6. When considering whether to hear the deputation request, council assembly can decide:
  - to receive the deputation at this meeting or a future meeting; *or*
  - that the deputation not be received; *or*
  - to refer the deputation to the most appropriate committee/sub-committee.
7. A deputation shall consist of no more than six people, including its spokesperson. One member of the deputation shall be allowed to address the meeting for no longer than 5 minutes. The deputation spokesperson or any member of the deputation nominated by him or her shall be invited to ask a question of the leader or relevant cabinet member. After this time councillors

may ask questions of the deputation for up to 5 minutes. At the conclusion of the questions, the deputation will be shown to the public seating area where they may listen to the remainder of the open section of the meeting.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Deputation requests on the themed debate**

8. The following deputation requests were the first three requests received on the theme. The deputations are listed in order of receipt.

#### **1. Deputation from SGTO**

The deputation request states:

“We wish to hand in a petition which is concerned with the rules of the so called bedroom tax, we are campaigning for the council not to evict tenants who fall into arrears purely due to the extra cost of the under occupancy rules.”

#### **2. Deputation from Southwark Legal Advice Network**

This deputation request states:

“We wish

- To inform members of the impact so far on the people we see
- To ask the council how they will respond to tenants who have accrued rent arrears due to welfare reform
- To request that the council’s anti-poverty strategies address the needs of larger families affected by the benefit cap.”

#### **3. Deputation from Cambridge House**

The deputation states:

“We wish to address the council assembly to raise awareness of the work we are doing to combat the impact of welfare reform. Cambridge House is having to provide additional services to increasing numbers of existing beneficiaries. Added to this, there are demands for services to address the needs of new beneficiaries, emerging as austerity measures, welfare and legal reforms affect local communities.

One new initiative is the user-led youth empowerment programme which aims to enable the voices of young people to be heard, influence decisions which affect their lives and shape the future of civil society. This project has been developed by young people in response to the increasing number of deaths from street violence and gang culture, and the fear that increasing poverty resulting from welfare reform will exacerbate the situation. Initiated and led by Southwark residents and workers, the project aims to kick-start a coalition of outreach work across London which will be known as ‘One Big Community’ and is a true example of what can be achieved with energy, belief and understanding of young people within London and an example of what can be achieved in the face of welfare reform with adequate support and funding.

Our deputation will give a brief overview of our work in light of the relevant welfare reform debate as well as provide an introduction to some of the inspiring young people with whom we are working with.”

#### 4. Deputation from Southwark Trades Council

The deputation states:

“The subject we wish to speak on is Social Security Reforms, to the debate on a ‘fairer future’.”

#### Other deputation requests received by the deadline

9. The other deputation requests received by the deadline are set out in item 4.

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Deputation Request File	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Lesley John 020 7525 7228
Council Assembly Procedure Rule 2.6, Southwark Constitution	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Lesley John 020 7525 7228

#### AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer	
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	8 July 2013	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Title</b>	<b>Comments sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director Finance & Corporate Services	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	8 July 2013	

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****WEDNESDAY 10 JULY 2013****Including themed debate on welfare reform****SOME COMMUNITY VIEWS**

- I am a taxpayer and council tax payer living in SE1.

I support the coalition government's reforms of welfare – but these reforms barely scratch the surface of the welfare monster originally intended as a safety net for working people. Not a way of living. Work already done to lift the tax threshold eventually to £10k is progress.

The London living wage should also be introduced in tandem with these reforms to make business share some of the burden from the taxpayer. HMRC also needs to toughen up on some cosy relationships with big business to make them pay their tax.

- The British State has created an entire class of people who are utterly dependent upon the state – the incentives to compel people to work and pay their way in society are not strong enough. Southwark Council's own data shows us that the majority of residents in social housing are out of work. As long as their rent is paid for by the Council via housing benefit, this situation will not change. It's called human nature.
- Southwark also has one of the UK's worst and shameful records of Council Tax collection - I would suggest that as a Council you focus your efforts on improving this dire record. Recently, the BBC reported that four Southwark councillors had received summons for late payment of Southwark Council tax.
- Welfare also means that money is diverted from productive, wealth-creating, growth-creating activities such as building housing, schools and transport improvements. Such projects will help people back into work – a virtuous circle. Housing benefit also ends up in the pockets of private landlords, when the state should be spending this money on housing – a crazy situation.
- The way in which Council Housing is allocated also distorts the socio-economic make-up of this borough into two extremes – the very rich who can afford to live in luxury riverside developments granted consent by Southwark council with zero on-site affordable housing – contrasting with Council housing which is only allocated to the poorest. There is no space for anyone in the middle.
- There aren't enough jobs.

Jobs don't pay enough to afford living costs in the UK – that goes double for London.

There is a national housing crisis caused by chronic undersupply and multiple housing booms, happily stoked by governments of all stripes.

The social security spend always goes up in a recession, and Conservative governments always try to use these figure as normative to build sympathy for their argument – i.e. the infantile Shirkers vs. Strivers talking point.

While I salute those who are trying to engage with these issues, these questions in my opinion go far beyond the scope of local councillors. If I have a point of view to feed into the meeting, it's that our local councillors should do what they can to ensure the public is informed. Otherwise you just get the same recycled ignorance that passes for debate on this issue.

- ... As for local communities, I would like to see the Council document the real day-to-day impact of "benefit reform" on the lives of people in Southwark and report that back to Government.
- I work with people who have physical and mental health disabilities including older people and fear for their future where they do not have income other than benefits to rely on. Accurate and timely information rather than propaganda is needed for these and other affected groups and their carers so they can respond – so my question is what efforts are being made by central and local government to access people wherever they are and who maybe can't for example, get out to meetings? What follow up will there be of isolated people who may not now be able to pay for essential services like home care to at least check if they are alive? What efforts are being made to maintain supportive communities and for vulnerable people as cuts close centres and neighbourhoods in SE1 change.
- Good luck Southwark council, please do focus your attention on the people in need, supporting them as best as possible and highlighting their plight with Government and the media.
- Given the demographics of the country and the borough the issue is what is affordable. I have sympathies with both sides of the arguments but what is debatable is what is affordable – except within a small band – and that is where the subsidy comes from...quite simply local council gets money from central government... that is subsidy in any form and how it is shared out is definitely up for discussion...but it is limited to what it is and no more.

We could discuss the merits of contribution from different (income) groups ad infinitum but it is what we have to spend that is finite and needs to be understood better by all...unless we want to dismantle the whole social system we currently have?

Regarding information on the reform of welfare assistance:

- If you mean information on the impact these cuts are having then all I can say is that without my addiction to talk radio, i.e. LBC radio 5 etc, I wouldn't have a clue about the plight of those undergoing these reforms, you get to listen to some very upsetting calls and suicidal callers.
- Strangely just hearing that Moneybox Live is going to be about Welfare Benefit changes (cuts) today!

<b>Item No.</b> 4.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 10 July 2013	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Other Deputation Requests	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly considers whether or not to hear a deputation from the groups listed in paragraph 5 of this report.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The full list of deputation requests received and the order in which they were submitted for this meeting is set out in item 2.3. The council assembly procedure rule 2.6 (11) states that no more than three deputations shall be considered at any one meeting. However the meeting can decide to suspend this rule in order to hear more or vary the order.
3. When considering whether to hear the deputation request, council assembly can decide:
  - to receive the deputation at this meeting or a future meeting; *or*
  - that the deputation not be received; *or*
  - to refer the deputation to the most appropriate committee/sub-committee.
4. A deputation shall consist of no more than six people, including its spokesperson. One member of the deputation shall be allowed to address the meeting for no longer than 5 minutes. The deputation spokesperson or any member of the deputation nominated by him or her shall be invited to ask a question of the leader or relevant cabinet member. After this time councillors may ask questions of the deputation for up to 5 minutes. At the conclusion of the questions, the deputation will be shown to the public seating area where they may listen to the remainder of the open section of the meeting.

### KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

#### Other deputation requests

5. The following deputation requests were received on issues other than the subject of the themed section of the meeting. The deputations are listed in order of receipt.
  1. **Deputation from Communication Workers Union – Closure of Post Offices**

The deputation request states:

“As the territorial representative of the Communication Workers Union I wish to request a deputation to council assembly. I am aware that the issue of Rye Lane Crown Post Office and East Dulwich Crown Post Office are to be debated at the council meeting and consequently, we would like to provide a deputation to this meeting to address these particular issues.”

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Deputation Request File	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Lesley John 020 7525 7228
Council Assembly Procedure Rule 2.6, Southwark Constitution	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Lesley John 020 7525 7228

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer	
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	5 July 2013	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Title</b>	<b>Comments sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director Finance & Corporate Services	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	5 July 2013	



<b>Item No.</b> 7.1	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 10 July 2013	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Question on report: Fairer Future Annual Performance Report 2012/13	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ROSIE SHIMELL**

The council has an objective to increase the percentage of children getting one of their preferences for a primary school. Why does the council not have a similar objective for secondary school children given that its performance in offering children their first preference is among the worst in the country?

**2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE**

Can the Leader provide a breakdown of the assessment of public satisfaction with leisure centres by leisure centre and by satisfaction rating? How many users were surveyed at each of the leisure centres?

**3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR PODDY CLARK**

How many residents from each community council area were sent satisfaction surveys in 2012/13? What were the criteria for selecting the residents to be surveyed? What satisfaction results were recorded in each community council area?

**4. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL BUKOLA**

Why did the 2012/13 target for warm, dry and safe change from the £68m predicted in the council's annual performance report in 2011/12 to £61.8m in the latest council's annual performance report?

**5. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR WILMA NELSON**

How many complaints have been received about leaseholder billing in 2012/13?

**6. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR TIM MCNALLY**

Why has the council reduced the target for the number of empty private homes brought back into use from 135 in 2012/13 to 100 in 2013/14?

**7. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Please provide a full breakdown of results from the council's reputation tracker on satisfaction among residents regarding ability to influence decisions affecting their local area.

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	8 July 2013

<b>Item No.</b> 8.1	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 10 July 2013	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Question on report: Gambling Act 2005 – Southwark Statement Of Gambling Licensing Policy 2013-2016	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR CATHERINE BOWMAN**

Does the leader agree that local residents should have more say over the types of shops on their local high streets?

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	8 July 2013

<b>Item No.</b> 8.3	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 10 July 2013	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Question on report: Constitutional Review 2013/14	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Will the Leader guarantee that members' arrangements to visit front-line services will not be obstructed by chief officers?

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer
<b>Version</b>	Final
<b>Dated</b>	8 July 2013

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MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14**

**NOTE:** Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to  
Lesley John Tel: 020 7525 7228/7236

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