

# Council Assembly

Wednesday 26 March 2014

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## Supplemental Agenda No.2

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### Contact

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Date: 21 March 2014

# Agenda Item 2.2

<b>Item No.</b> 2.2	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 26 March 2014	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Public Question Time	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

## 1. QUESTION FROM MICK BARNARD TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

If an officer stated *I have therefore decided this complaint is not within my remit to investigate* would the leader consider the complaint to have been investigated by that officer or that it needs to be investigated using another process and would he expect that process to be identified?

<b>Item No.</b> 2.3	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 26 March 2014	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Deputation Requests on the Theme – Future Vision for Southwark	
<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 on the theme 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:

No.	Date received	Title	Type
1.	22 January 2014	The council's constitution	General
2.	22 January 2014	Meat Free day	Theme
3.	12 February 2014	Draper House	Theme
4.	13 February 2014	Selling council homes	General
5.	19 March 2014	Our new vision for council housing in Southwark	Theme

4. The details for the deputations on the themed debate are set out in this report. The details of the general deputations 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 five 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 five 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 request from Southwark Vegan and Vegetarian Society**

The deputation request states:

We would like Southwark Council to show official support for SouthwarkMeatFreeMondays.

Current support includes:

- Over 200 Southwark residents
- Southwark's three MPs – Simon Hughes, Tessa Jowell and Harriet Harman
- 15 of Southwark's councillors
- Many local restaurants, cafes and churches and will soon have some schools on board.

Outcomes from Southwark council support:

- Officially support and acknowledge that SouthwarkMeatFreeMondays is a positive, healthy and beneficial programme.
- SouthwarkMeatFreeMondays in the council's own offices, and in the other public buildings for which it is responsible, including local schools.

Benefits for Southwark include:

- Better for residents' health – reduce illness and obesity. Oxford University's department of public health found eating meat no more than three times a week could save the NHS £1.2 billion in costs and prevent 31,000 deaths from heart disease, 9,000 deaths from cancer and 5,000 deaths from stroke every year.
- Better for the environment – reduce Southwark's carbon foot print – meat production uses more water, energy, land and creates more CO2 and methane than a plant based diet. United Nation Food and Agriculture Organization estimates livestock production is "one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global".
- Better for the animals – Billions of animals are farmed and killed for meat each year, most in intensive factory farms, ending their lives with a brutal death. Eating less meat is a compassionate step that helps prevent animal cruelty and suffering.

## **2. Deputation request from Draper House Residents**

This deputation request has been received from a group of local residents. It states:

The Draper House Residents are not satisfied with the major refurbishment works and scaffolding at Draper House. The residents wish to talk about the way housing is being dealt with as part of the vision for Southwark.

We understand the theme of the meeting is "The State of the Borough". If Southwark is to flourish, the staff of the local authority, and our elected councillors should be aware of issues of management of major contracts, and the authorities capacity to respond to criticism of process.

The Draper House residents have endured 25 months of building works at Draper House. As residents we have tried very hard to bring the shortcomings of the building works to the attention of elected members, and staff, yet they have been unable (or unwilling) to address the concerns we have raised.

We have spent many hours unpaid talking with staff and contractors both in and out of formal meetings in a spirit of collaboration to help the works pass efficiently, acting to try to minimise waste and to working on a collegiate manner to speed the conclusion of building work in and around our homes.

That there were problems with the major works is a matter of historical record. Our deputation aims to bring to attention of elected councillors that the culture of the administration appears to be changed.

We are concerned that a less helpful attitude has driven out a culture of dialogue and improvement.

It seems now apparent that there is an emerging culture of mediocrity and complacency allowing sub-standard delivery to persist.

We fear that this behaviour is now rewarded, driving out a commitment to serving the community and the residents of Southwark.

When residents complaint and question the spending of public money, and the safety of the construction, instead of receiving timely responses, they have been accused of harassing London Borough of Southwark officers.

Instead of answering genuine inquiries from residents, many of whom have professional experience in related fields, officers appear to be retreating into a bunker, refusing to engage with residents.

Those officers who are hiding behind patched regulations and who refuse to be accountable for great errors and frustrating blunders.

To whom shall we raise these real issues in order to be listened to and have the high standard of delivery the citizens should expect to?

Do contractors and staff simply expect that their mistakes will go unnoticed?

What state is the borough in when million pound contracts are not checked? When local residents are prepared to help, but are shut out? When residents live in fear of council staff entering their homes?

### 3. Our new vision for council housing in Southwark

The deputation request states:

We want to speak about our vision and approach to delivering new council-rent homes in Southwark, building on the wishes of local people and the findings of the Southwark Housing Commission. In particular, we want to talk about how we are looking to deliver this at a site on the Kipling Estate SE1, to explain the subtle, but important, differences between our approach and the standard approach used in the delivery of new council homes elsewhere across the borough – particularly the feedback from local people about what they'd expect from the process. Having explained this we would be wanting to seek the council's support to facilitate the successful delivery of our approach.

#### Other deputation requests received by the deadline

9. The general deputation requests received by the deadline are set out in the table in paragraph 3 above and are outlined in full 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>	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager	
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	21 March 2014	
<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 of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	21 March 2014	

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY****WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014****Themed debate on Future Vision for Southwark****SOME COMMUNITY VIEWS****Viewpoint 1**

I work here in Southwark. I adore it, but cannot afford to live here. I do love the history of the borough, however, I do not love the high rises.

**Viewpoint 2**

I live in the borough and I like it a lot. There are good markets here with good food and friendly people. Southwark has many different types of people. People are evenly mixed and everyone seems to get along well. Southwark is very central and has very good access; especially the tube links are good.

I am worried about the high rising property prices, and the new buildings at Elephant and Castle.

**Viewpoint 3**

I work in Southwark and like the green spaces. I love the pubs on the other side. During the Olympics I loved the Freeview Screens set up. I like the sites, such as Tower Bridge. The development buildings are not nice. There was once a nice view on Tower Bridge, but the high rises block that now. The transport connection is very nice and convenient too. I love the restaurant on Tooley

Street and along the riverside, but Tooley Street lacks shops and banks. I have to walk to London Bridge station to find a bank.

#### **Viewpoint 4**

I only know the bankside at Tower Bridge. The borough is very historic and I like the parks along the riverside.

#### **Viewpoint 5**

I like the borough, Tower Bridge and the architecture. I like the diversity of people in the borough.

#### **Viewpoint 6**

We came to the river, and walked up from Waterloo station until Tower Bridge. We live 50 miles outside of London.

Compared to the opposite side of the river, the Southwark riverside has more open space. There is always something new to look at, and it feels like a safe and nice area. We like the restaurants.

#### **Viewpoint 7**

I like Southwark and its old history. I do not live in Southwark right now, but used to live in Dulwich. Dulwich has much better connections now with the overground, which makes a big difference to people.

Dulwich has changed and smaller independent shops closed down when more people from the outside moved in. There should be a balance between old and new people in an area, but that is not always the case.



**Viewpoint 8**

I live in Dulwich, which is a nice area. It has changed for the better in the last few years.

**Viewpoint 9**

I am a retired NHS health worker, and I am impressed by how proactive Southwark is being in developing projects.

**Viewpoint 10**

Apprenticeships and youth training schemes are very good for improving the employment prospects of young people. A lot of them feel discouraged from going to university because of the high costs involved.

**Viewpoint 11**

We have many opportunities for young people in Southwark, and the council is doing a good job at organising events and activities for young people, as well as providing youth clubs.

**Viewpoint 12**

I like the diverse nature of the borough. And the weather – it always shines in Peckham Rye! The parks are good – the flowers are lovely in Peckham Rye park. The swimming pools are too expensive though.

It's about the people mainly. The history is so great, you see it everywhere when you walk the streets. You walk along and think who has walked here before me.

I've been in Southwark for three years and I hope to stay.

### **Viewpoint 13**

My friends, family, and doctors – it's all here. I work at St Thomas' Hospital. But I'm being evicted from my home [by a private landlord]. I've been waiting almost eight years to be housed.

It's a nice area. I'm from Columbia and this [Walworth Road] is my area. I've been in Southwark for 13 years. Before, in 2000/2001 there were hardly any Latin Americans. Now –it's too much!

<b>Item No.</b> 4.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 26 March 2014	<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 deputations 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 five 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 five 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 request from a group of local residents on the council's constitution and related documents**

The deputation request states:

We want to raise issues in connection with the framework of the constitution and its relationship with other council policies and procedures in particular we are concerned that when it comes to implementing a particular policy or procedure little consideration is given to the fundamental principles contained within the constitution.

Subject areas include response times, the correct process, inconsistency and decision making.

We will expect to cover issues around the complaints procedure (not a specific complaint), code of conduct, code of corporate governance, employee code of conduct and council assembly procedure rules.

We hope to achieve support from members who in turn can have dialogue with officers to ensure the relevant policies and procedures can be firmed up where necessary which will in turn improve community confidence in the system.

## 2. Selling council homes

The deputation request states:

We feel strongly about the way in which Southwark Council is selling off its council homes at auction which we feel may have an adverse effect on the future of housing in Southwark. Most recently the 5 bedroom house next door to ours was sold by Southwark Council at auction for over £550,000. The house was purchased by a property developer who renovated the house and has now let/rented out each room in the house.

We have difficulty in understanding why this property and other similar large properties in Southwark are not being renovated by Southwark Council and rented out to Southwark families on the housing waiting list? This forms the key part of our deputation in that we would like to know why Southwark Council continues to sell its properties, particularly large homes, at auction without being given to or being offered for sale to families on the Southwark Council housing waiting list? Some of these families will have been on the housing waiting list for many years and are in desperate need for housing whilst at the same time the number of large council properties is decreasing.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
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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>	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager	
<b>Report Author</b>	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer	
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<b>Dated</b>	21 March 2014	
<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 of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		21 March 2014

<b>Item No.</b> 7.3	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 26 March 2014	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Question on report – Council’s Pay Policy Statement	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

**1. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

At the February council assembly meeting, the cabinet member agreed to review the council's pay policy so that pay structures are less complicated and it is easy for anyone to know how much a member of staff on a particular grade is paid. What progress has he made on this commitment?

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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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