

Item No. 2.3	Classification: Open	Date: 26 March 2014	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Deputation Requests on the Theme – Future Vision for Southwark	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		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

Lead Officer	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager	
Report Author	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	21 March 2014	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	21 March 2014	