

Item No. 3.1	Classification: Open	Date: 25 March 2015	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Community Evidence on the Themed Debate	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

1. On 16 September 2014 the council assembly business panel met to agree the themes for 2014/15 meetings of council assembly. The panel agreed that the theme for March council assembly should be 'welfare reform with an emphasis on financial inclusion.

Community evidence on the theme

2. The deadline for community evidence was midnight, Thursday, 19 March 2015.
3. The following requests have been received by the deadline for consideration by this meeting and they are list in the order received below:
 1. Pecan (Southwark Foodbank)
 2. Southwark Citizens Advice Bureau Service
 3. Blackfriars Advice Centre.
4. Which community evidence shall be considered and the length of each submission will be established by way of a programme motion at the start of council assembly. Community evidence shall be conducted under the existing rules for public participation.

Submissions

1. Pecan (Southwark Foodbank)

Pecan would like to make a presentation on the topic of the support Pecan is providing through the Southwark Foodbank and its other services to local people and in particular how the people Pecan supports have been affected by the welfare reform. Pecan is based at 121A Peckham High Street, London, SE15 5SE.

2. Southwark Citizen Advice Bureau Service

To provide a presentation on the impacts of welfare reform on the residents we see, and examples of how agencies can work together to provide effective support.

3. Blackfriars Advice Centre

To provide a presentation on the link between mental health and debt. From a meeting with practice managers of GP's surgeries in Southwark it is clear the demand for advice services is unprecedented and the emotional distress of welfare reform is having a damaging affect on the health and wellbeing of local people. The impact of the loss of legal aid funding, welfare reform and the reduction of wider services can be extremely detrimental for those with mental health and physical disabilities e.g. a negative ESA appeal causing a reduction in income or nil income (pending the outcome of the mandatory reconsideration notice) The lack of on going support to these individuals leads to spiralling debt and further mental health problems. We support the proposition to consider financial advice in health centres and welcome the opportunity to work with the CCG and across the political divide to ensure the best outcome for the most vulnerable and ask that the widest consideration be used to ensure that debt advice and health are not explored in isolation but in relation to welfare reform and wider social justice and health inequality issues.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Constitution	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Constitutional Team constitutional.team@southwark.gov.uk 020 7525 7228

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager		
Report Author	Lesley John, Constitutional Officer		
Version	Final		
Dated	23 March 2015		
Key decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer 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		23 March 2015	