

Item No. 6A	Classification: Open	Date: 19 May 2010	Meeting Name: Council Assembly (Annual Meeting)
Report title:		Introduction of a Petitions Scheme - Addendum Report	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the council assembly consider the addendum in conjunction with the main report and approve the revised threshold for petitions to be debated at council assembly (see paragraph 4 below).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ["the Act"] imposes a new statutory petition scheme duty on local authorities to have a scheme for handling petitions which must be approved by full council and published on the council's website.
3. The constitutional steering panel considered the main report on 18 May 2010 and recommended the scheme and constitutional changes with one change to the threshold for the number of signatories required for a petition to request a debate by council assembly.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. The constitutional steering panel recommended that the threshold for the number of signatories required for a petition to request a debate by council assembly on a particular matter be amended from a threshold of 3,000 to 2,500.
5. In appendix 2 the constitutional change to council assembly procedure note 2.4 (1) would read as follows:

2.4 PETITIONS TO COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

This rule cannot be suspended.

Which meetings consider petitions?

1. Members of the public or councillors ~~Members of the council~~ will be entitled to present petitions with 2,500 or more signatures to the Mayor at each council assembly meeting except the annual meeting or the council tax setting meeting.
6. A consequential change would be made to the petition scheme in Appendix 1.

REASONS FOR URGENCY

7. The provisions relating to petition schemes come into force on 15 June 2010. The scheme must be approved by council assembly by virtue of section 11 (2) of the Act. There is no other meeting before the prescribed date.

REASONS FOR LATENESS

8. The proposals in the report contain proposed changes to the constitution to implement the petitions scheme. The constitution states that any changes to the constitution which can only be approved by council assembly will require the prior consideration of the proposal by the constitutional steering panel, which met on 18 May 2010. The statutory guidance was published on 30 March 2010 and there was no constitutional steering panel held between this date and the election.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark's Constitution.	Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TZ	Lesley John 020 7525 7228
Petitions Guidance.	Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TZ	Norman Coombe 020 7525 7678

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Deborah Collins, Strategic Director of Communities, law & Governance	
Report Authors	Andrew Weir, Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	19 May 2010	
Key Decision?	No	
Consultation with other officers / directorates / executive member		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	Yes	Incorporated in report
Finance Director	No	No
Executive Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		19 May 2010