

CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY			
Report Title	Positive Ageing Council: Recommendations on changes to Council constitution		
Key Decision			Item No.
Ward	All		
Contributors	Neighbourhood and Community Development		
Class	Part 1	Date: 15 November 2011	

1. Purpose of the report

To update the Constitution Working Party on the newly established Positive Ageing Council and recommend changes to the constitution.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Constitution Working Party:

- 2.1 endorses the establishment of the Positive Ageing Council; and
- 2.2 asks the Council to consider the changes to the constitution set out in section 4 below

3. Background to the Positive Ageing Council

- 3.1 The Mayor of Lewisham made a pledge in 2010 to establish an 'Elders Council' to enable older residents to be fully engaged in the issues relating to them, to be involved in making decisions that effect their daily lives and the communities in which they live, and to advise other Council Boards and Partnerships.
- 3.2 For the past five years, there has been a Cabinet member for Older People. The postholder has championed the interests and needs of older people and has a sphere of influence which is cross-directorate.
- 3.3 Previously, the Positive Ageing Board, which comprised 20 – 30 older Residents, met on a regular basis to discuss policies and initiatives and to share good practice. While there were numerous successful initiatives coming through the Positive Ageing Board, the Board did not sit within the Council reporting framework and as such the issues and concerns of older people which the Board review, have no formal reporting pathway.

- 3.4 The Cabinet Member for Older People and the Positive Ageing Board, along with Officers, spent some time researching options for what the Elders Council might look like. It was agreed that the term 'Positive Ageing Council' would better promote the energy and direction of the proposed Council than 'Elders Council'.
- 3.5 Two models for the Positive Ageing Council were presented to the Mayor at Mayor & Cabinet on 23 February 2011.
- 3.6 The first model was to set up a new democratically elected Positive Ageing Council of 18 residents aged 60 years or over, from each of the 18 wards, with regular elections.
- 3.7 The second model was a community-based Positive Ageing Council, where 4 meetings would be held per year, following the local assembly format, which would be open to any resident over the age of 60 to attend and give a view.
- 3.8 The Mayor agreed to implement the second model, a community-based Positive Ageing Council, with a view to reviewing it in three years time.
- 3.9 The Mayor also noted that changes to the Council's Constitution would be required in order for the Positive Ageing Council to be formally recognised within the Council's reporting framework and agreed that the matter should be referred to the Constitution Working Group to consider the changes to the Constitution necessary to implement these arrangements.
- 3.10 The Positive Ageing Council was launched in May 2011 and has met again in September 2011.
- 3.11 The Positive Ageing Council operates as an open forum to debate and champion issues affecting older people in the Borough. It has identified priority issues and works in partnership to identify and implement solutions. The Positive Ageing Council is able to use similar tools for influencing local decisions as the assemblies i.e. the ability to refer matters to select committees and the power to take one motion per annum to the Mayor and Cabinet.
- 3.11 The previous Positive Ageing Board formed the new steering group for the Positive Ageing Council, alongside 8 new members drawn from the Council. They meet regularly to plan the agenda and oversee the actioning of items raised at meetings. Steering group members will represent the Positive Ageing Council by attending Council partnership boards and other forums as observers and feeding back on current issues to the meetings.

4. Changes to the constitution

Based on the approach outlined above the following changes to the Council's constitution are proposed, additional text marked in **bold**:

4.1 PART II ARTICLES

Article 3 Citizens and the council

Section 3.2 Citizens participation in Council decision making

“For example, they may respond to consultation through the forward planning process, ask questions at Council Question Time, contribute to investigations by overview and scrutiny panels, participate in their local ward assembly, **participate in the Positive Ageing Council**, and take up one of the many statutory roles, such as becoming a school governor.”

4.2 PART II ARTICLES

Article 6: Overview and scrutiny

Section 6.6 Roles common to select committees and the Business Panel

(d) Community representation

Third bullet

- To liaise with the Council's ward assemblies **and Positive Ageing Council** so that the local community might participate in the democratic process and where it considers it appropriate to seek the views of the ward assemblies **and Positive Ageing Council** on matters that affect or are likely to affect the local areas, including accepting items for the agenda of the appropriate select committee from ward assemblies **and the Positive Ageing Council**.

Fourth bullet

- To keep the Council's ward assemblies **and Positive Ageing Council** under review and to make recommendations to the Executive and/or Council as to how participation in the democratic process by local people can be enhanced.

4.3 PART II ARTICLES

Article 12: Ward Assemblies **and Positive Ageing Council**

The Council has established a consultative network of eighteen ward assemblies. Though they are not decision making bodies, the ward assemblies are an important consultative mechanism and provide a conduit to the council and other public service providers through which the local community can identify and prioritise local issues. The Rules of Procedure at Part IV demonstrate how the views of the assemblies will be brought to the attention of the Council and the Executive.

The Council has established the Positive Ageing Council, which gives local residents over 60 years of age a forum within the Council structure for discussing issues relating to later life in the borough. Though they it is not a decision making body, the Positive Ageing Council is an important consultative mechanism and provide a conduit to the council and other public service providers through which older people can identify and prioritise issues. The Rules of Procedure at Part IV demonstrate how the views of the Positive Ageing Council will be brought to the attention of the Council and the Executive.

4.4 PART IV PROCEDURE RULES – STANDING ORDERS

D Executive Procedure Rules

19 Who can put items on the agenda for a meeting of the Executive

(new section:) **Positive Ageing Council. Only one referral may be made by the Positive Ageing Council to the Mayor and Cabinet in any twelve month period, unless the Mayor agrees to the contrary.**

7. **Legal implications**

The Council is under a statutory requirement to produce and maintain a constitution under the provisions of Section 37 of the Local Government Act (2000), which must be available for public inspection. Changes to the constitution are a matter reserved for decision by the full Council. The Constitution Working Party was established to advise the Council on the operation of the constitution and when the Constitution Working Party has considered the proposals within this report its recommendations will be reported to Council for decision.

8. **Crime and disorder implications**

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

9. **Equalities implications**

There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report. However, the Positive Ageing Council will give people over 60 years of age a formal forum where they can actively become involved on issues of importance to older residents and enable them to contribute at a range of levels and influence decision-making processes.

10. **Financial implications**

The annual cost of running the Positive Ageing Council are as follows:

STAFFING	
1 x PO2 Local Assembly Coordinator (1/3 rd post)	£15,022
OTHER	
Support costs (including those for meetings)	£10,000
TOTAL	£25,022

These costs will be met within the Neighbourhood and Community Development division budget.

11. Environmental implications

There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report. However, issues such as travel and health are important to people over 60 years of age, some of whom may be retired and the Positive Ageing Council will be a forum where concerns and improvements can be discussed and provide an opportunity to effect change.

12. Conclusions and next steps

- 12.1 The Positive Ageing Council has been set up to debate and discuss issues relating to older people in the borough. It gives older people an established forum within the Council through which their concerns can be heard.
- 12.2 There will be opportunities over time to assess the impact of these arrangements and consider expanding the range of activity and responsibilities delegated to this level of working.
- 12.3 When the Constitution Working Party has considered the proposals within this report its recommendations will be reported to Council for decision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

For more information on this report please contact Petra Smith, Local Assemblies Manager, on 020 8314 7034.