

## Council to ask for YOUR views on January 19

You are going to be asked for your views on a new Council plan for the southern area — the area you live in — at a public meeting in the crypt of St Peters Church on Wednesday January 19. The meeting is being organised by Hackney Council.

The plan is being prepared by Ryder's, an outside firm of planning consultants, and is due to go before Hackney's housing development committee on Thursday January 6. The idea is that the committee, and Hackney Council, should take no decision on the consultant's plan until local people have been consulted.

It should be made available to all interested parties after January 6, but it may first go to the Council's policy committee. Anyway, we will do all we can to let you know what it says.

Mr Frank Fletcher, secretary of the Southern Area Action Group (SAAG), has written to Coun Martin Ottolangui, leader of the Council, to ask him to make the plan available to local people as soon as possible to give us all a chance to make up our minds by January 19. SAAG will also follow up and find out what local people think - so they can represent everyone's interests through to the public inquiry and afterwards.

The next big step after January 19 is the public inquiry into the Council application to rescind the southern area General Improvement Area declared by the Conservatives when they were in power in Hackney. The inquiry will be at Hackney Town Hall, in Mare Street, on Saturday March 25 -- as revealed in the last issue of De Beaver.

The Council's Labour group wants to be able to go to the inquiry able to say that they and local people agree on a new plan. Which means that the Council's policy-makers should listen carefully to what we and you have to say on January 19. So come along & have your say - it will be worth it!

The Council's declared policy for the area is that basically sound housing should be kept and improved

(with modern amenities, wcs, bathroom, etc) and that outworn housing should be demolished and redeveloped. The Council also hopes to provide open space for New Town residents in the area.

As far as we can see, the most likely disagreement will be over whether parts of the area should be picked out for improvement or redevelopment street by street, or block by block. SAAG and the planning team think that block by block is the fairest way; the Council's policy men fear that this would be too dear a way.

SAAG also wants this "in-filling" type of redevelopment to be carried out in stages, so that occupants of houses to be demolished could be rehoused locally -- as most of us wish.

After many complaints by SAAG and local people, Hackney's housing department is to deal with the nuisances caused by its vacant house at 65 De Beauvoir Road. Mr A Upton, next door, had to write three times before he got a reply. Damp had soaked through two walls and ruined his adjoining lower ground floor room. Vandals entered the neglected house at night and children play there. It is overgrown and strewn with debris. "The house was in good repair when purchased by the Council (four years ago) and to let it become such a wreck is bad enough," he wrote. He has kept up his own house, but the Council neglects its property and spoils his. The housing department has now promised to investigate and remedy the damp, clear the rubbish, and make the house safe & secure.

Hackney Council is acquiring three southern area houses, 51-55 Culford Road. We understand the price is £9000 for the three houses, one of which is tenanted. No 53 has been badly damaged by vandals.

De Beaver will bring out regular fact sheets to keep people in the southern area fully informed about what is happening to their homes & their neighbourhood.