

Subject:	Open Night Shelters for Rough Sleepers Petition: Extract from the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on the 6 April 2017		
Date of Meeting:	4 May 2017		
Report of:	Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law		
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee

To receive the item referred from the Council for consideration.

Recommendations:

That the petition be considered by the Committee.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**COUNCIL****4.30PM 6 APRIL 2017****COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL****MINUTES**

Present: Councillors West (Chair), Marsh (Deputy Chair), Allen, Atkinson, Barford, Barnett, Bell, Bennett, Brown, Cattell, Chapman, Cobb, Daniel, Deane, Druitt, Gibson, Gilbey, Greenbaum, Hamilton, Hill, Horan, Hyde, Inkpin-Leissner, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Meadows, Mears, Miller, Mitchell, Moonan, Morgan, Morris, Nemeth, A Norman, K Norman, O'Quinn, Page, Peltzer Dunn, Penn, Phillips, Robins, Russell-Moyle, Simson, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wares, Wealls and Yates.

89 PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE**(e) OPEN NIGHT SHELTERS FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS**

- 89.1 The Mayor stated that where a petition secured 1,250 or more signatures it could be debated at the council meeting. He had been made aware of five such petitions and would therefore take each in turn.
- 89.43 The Mayor then invited John Hadman as the lead petitioner to present the petition calling on the Council to open night shelters for rough sleepers by utilising its empty properties.
- 89.44 Mr. Hadman thanked the Mayor and stated that the petition had reached over 4,150 signatures which demonstrated the strength of support for rough sleepers and the desire to find suitable properties that could be used as night shelters throughout the year. He stated that other organisations such as the churches and private owners had offered to collaborate with the council, in order to use properties at their disposal. He was also aware that the council did open up properties during the colder months after a 3-day period of cold weather but wanted to find a solution that offered somewhere to shelter throughout the year. He noted that following a previous Notice of Motion to the council a list of potential buildings was to be drawn up but that was still awaited after 6 weeks. He hoped that in bringing the petition it would lead to some progress and action being taken.
- 89.45 The Mayor thanked Mr. Hadman and called on Councillor Moonan to respond to the petition.

- 89.46 Councillor Moonan thanked the petitioner and acknowledged that the petition had a great deal of support. She noted that the country was in the middle of a housing crisis and that the numbers of rough sleepers were increasing. She stated that the council had introduced a Rough Sleeper Strategy to support those sleeping rough in the city and was looking to work with all partner organisations to ensure a joined approach to the situation. She noted that the Council had a severe weather protocol that was implemented when there had been 3 consecutive nights of cold weather and that this was regularly extended beyond the guidance issued by DCLG. However, she also accepted that more needed to be done and a report was due to be considered at the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee in May on the potential of using council owned empty buildings as night shelters. A list of these had been drawn up and would be considered in conjunction with the plans identified for their future use. She believed that Mr. Hadman should take credit for highlighting the issue and she hoped that the council would soon be in a position to offer a better solution.
- 89.47 Councillor Bell thanked Mr. Hadman for bringing the petition and Councillor Moonan for her comments. He stated that there was a need to acknowledge the work being undertaken in the city to help rough sleepers but felt that more could be done such as not having to wait for 3 consecutive nights of cold weather. He believed that other climatic conditions should also be taken into consideration and that they should apply throughout the year and not just in the winter months.
- 89.48 Councillor Gibson welcomed the petition and stated that it was important to stress that the city was in the grips of a housing crisis. He noted that the number of people sleeping rough had increased to 144 with 89 people waiting for a hostel bed, the average wait time being 10 months. He also noted that rough sleepers were more likely to be attacked and only had a life expectancy of 47. He believed that an urgent response was required and hoped that this could be taken forward given the high level of public support shown by the petition.
- 89.49 In response to the debate Councillor Moonan thanked Mr. Hadman for his work in drawing the petition together and stated that with the report due to come to committee in May, she hoped that matters could be taken forward as quickly as possible.
- 89.50 The Mayor noted that it was recommended to note and refer the petition to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee for consideration and put it to the vote which was **carried** unanimously.
- 89.51 **RESOLVED:** That the petition be noted and referred to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee for consideration at its meeting on the 4th May 2017.

