

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

10.00am 19 JUNE 2012

JUBILEE LIBRARY JUBILEE STREET BRIGHTON BN1 1GE. TEL: 01273 - 290800

MINUTES

Present: Hazelgrove (Chair), Tonks (Vice Chair), Bojczuk, Eyles, Steer, Terry, Brown, Vincent, Morley and Wakeling

Also in attendance: Councillor Ben Duncan

PART ONE

57. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

57.1 Councillor Geoffrey Bowden had given his apologies for this meeting.

58. UPDATE FROM LOCAL OLDER PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS

58.1 Kat Pearce told the meeting she would be continuing as Chief Executive Officer of Age UK Brighton & Hove for a further 6 months. She said the organisation was introducing a new advocacy service, focusing especially to help people with issues such as care providers, including discharge from hospital and care homes.

58.2 Sue Howley said to increase the impact of each monthly meeting, Pensioner Action was focussing on two key themes each time – one identified by older people themselves plus one other from neighbourhood groups. Older carers would be the subject of this month's meeting to be held in the Friends Meeting House on 24 July, 10.30 – 1pm plus concerns about booking appointments with GPs experienced by older people who cannot or do not apply on-line. The meetings were arranged jointly with Age UK Brighton & Hove, The Carers' Centre and others.

58.3 The Pensioner magazine would be issued in July. Pensioner Action would have a stand at People's Day on 14 July.

58.4 A representative of the Pensioners' Association said the next meeting - the morning of 10 July at Patching Lodge would include the regular 'Have your say' discussion. This was very effective in homing in on people's concerns.

59. OLDER PEOPLE: KEEPING SAFE; FIRE SAFETY

59.1 East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) Community Safety Officer Steve Wright gave a powerpoint presentation on Fire Safety for older and vulnerable people. The priority was to prevent fires, and reduce deaths, injuries and damage to buildings. Last year there had been as many as 10 deaths from fire compared with 4 in the previous year, and of these a high percentage were elderly with disabilities that were unknown to ESFRS.

59.2 Main causes of fires were unattended cooking and cigarettes/smoking. The maximum turn out time by ESFRS is 8 minutes to reach a fire even in more remote parts of East Sussex.

59.3 ESFRS provided free home safety visits for vulnerable people and are looking to visit at least 10,000 homes this year for residents who would benefit from a full risk assessment, advice and for those who are eligible, free smoke alarm including vibrating alarms for the hearing impaired. ESFRS was asking all agencies and organisations to check that staff were aware of the issues and encouraging everyone to refer vulnerable neighbours, to ESFRS. People with disabilities or drug or alcohol issues were eligible for the scheme.

59.4 Main advice to older people was to plan your escape if the main exit were blocked by fire and what to do if trapped – don't try to fight the fire as acrid smoke can kill quickly – and to keep a phone by the bed.

59.5 Answering questions, Mr Wright said smoke alarm batteries were designed to last 10 years which was usually the lifetime of the equipment and the alarm should be tested regularly. Smoke alarms were now compulsory for all new buildings and extensions and the average cost of an alarm is £12.

59.6 People's safety came first and therefore fire extinguishers, fire blankets or other methods were not normally recommended for use by older or vulnerable people. Small chip pan fires may be dealt with by turning off the gas supply if safe to do so.

59.7 The owner or managing agent of flats had responsibility to risk assess and test alarms and should have records. All flats should have at least ½ - 1 hour fire resistant doors. The Council was responsible to enforce homes registered as Homes in Multiple Occupancy. Housing Committee was to consider a new enforcement scheme scheduled to start later this year.

59.8 All schools had evacuation plans and are visited on a regular basis to receive safety education. The Football in the Community scheme included safety including fire and road safety.

59.9 Further information was available from <http://www.esfrs.org> or :
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, 20 Upperton Road , Eastbourne , East Sussex BN21 1EU. **Telephone** - 0303 999 1000 **Fax** - 01323 725 574 **Minicom** - 01323 462 003 **Email** - enquiries@esfrs.org

59.10 The Chair Jack Hazelgrove thanked Steve Wright for his presentation.

60. OLDER PEOPLE:KEEPING SAFE; COMMUNITY SAFETY

60.1 Councillor Ben Duncan, Chair of the BHCC Community Safety Forum, said the City Council worked closely with the Older People's Council. It was a pleasure to speak to the OPC, and he would report back to Councillor Geoffrey Bowden, who had given apologies for this meeting.

60.2 Councillor Duncan pointed out that CSF did not have decision-making powers but it included representatives of a wide range of public services and Community groups including tenants groups and local action teams.

60.3 He reassured the meeting that evidence showed that older people were less likely to be victims than other age groups. However older people did tend to be more fearful of crime. This perception was known to have an impact on older people's lives; such as feeling less safe when going out alone. Elder abuse was a known area of concern that was being addressed.

60.4 Councillor Duncan was pleased that the CSF acknowledged that the Brighton & Hove Community Safety Strategy took precedence over the Sussex-wide Sussex Policing Plan as it was tailored to local needs.

60.5 Community Safety Commissioner Linda Beanlands outlined the Partnership Community Safety Strategy, first developed in 1998. The Strategy was updated regularly but formerly it had not included a priority to increase the safety or feelings of safety of older people.

60.6 A Scrutiny Review of Older People and Community Safety had been led by Councillors and including John Eyles of OPC as co-optee. Detailed research and analysis from the Review had informed an action plan and Nahida Shaikh of the Partnership Community Safety Team was now leading on this work. Increasing the safety of older people and their perception of safety is now a priority in the current Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy.

[The strategy is for a three year period starting last year hence covering 2011 – 2014. It is refreshed every year i.e. this has been updated in 2012 and published in April 2012 on the Partnership website. www.safeinthecity.info

Those interested can find the full strategy on the website under the subheading 'documents' and 'data' and then 'Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy.' It includes sections relating to all 13 priority areas of crime including Older People.]

60.7 The outcomes from the scrutiny review were circulated. Two unexpected findings were the extent to which older people experienced domestic violence and a link with the safeguarding of older people. Priority areas in the current Community Safety Strategy included Domestic Violence and other areas that were also specific to older people. There was now close working with the Adult Safeguarding Board, of which Linda Beanlands was a member.

60.8 More work was needed for example in providing practical information in an appropriate format for older people (not necessarily on-line). This would include contact details for emergency or advice services, advice on staying safe, and dealing with doorstep callers, and community links.

60.9 Francis Tonks Vice Chair and OPC rep on CSF, gave an update of yesterday's CSF meeting including: a debate on responsibility for savage dogs; a reduction in overall recorded crime, though a 50% rise in personal theft such as mobile phones and handbags; elections in

November for a Sussex Police Commissioner with reservations expressed about accountability and representation of Brighton & Hove within the Sussex policing area; and crime and health implications of alcohol misuse.

60.10 Councillor Duncan had for 5 years been a member of the Sussex Police Authority that sets the annual budget and local policing plan, holding the local police to account. It had sometimes seemed a 'lone voice' for Brighton & Hove within Sussex as a whole and Councillor Duncan said he was disappointed that in November, representation of policing issues for the City would be further diluted with the introduction of the Police and Crime Panel that would include one delegate from each District and Borough. However Councillor Duncan and would continue to work to represent Brighton & Hove, in holding the new Police Commissioner to account. *A further update was that a second representative had been appointed for the city and that this would be Councillor Warren Morgan.*

60.11 Harry Steer served on the Police Informal Advisory Group and was an observer on the Practitioners' Alliance Against Abuse of Vulnerable Adults. PAVA was an important group addressing elder abuse that was usually hidden, be it physical, mental or financial.

60.12 Nahida Shaikh pointed out that work was progressing on a joint action plan that included PAVA and the Adult Safeguarding Board, to help recognise elder abuse and know how to respond. Training sessions were provided to frontline staff and procedures were being integrated.

60.13 Janet Wakeling of OPC described an incident involving cold-calling in road where a number of elderly people lived. The Commissioner Community Safety said Trading Standards and the Police would investigate with a view to setting up a 'no cold calling' area.

60.14 OPC heard further details of: joint working on community safety between Neighbourhood Care Scheme and Pensioners Association, both of which were supported by the 'Impetus' Brighton & Hove charity. The Pensioners' Association was in a position to help get community safety information to residents that were more isolated and hard to reach.

60.15 There was further information on a pilot data system that included police recorded crime data and more 'weight' given to community intelligence; an extra analyst for the Partnership Community Safety Team; and a reference group on domestic and sexual violence that included older and younger age groups.

60.16 In answer to a question on abuse, OPC heard that statutory services including the City Council all had formal complaints systems that worked well, for example the Police Professional Standards Committee followed up complaints thoroughly. Ward Councillors were also well-placed to progress a complaint about a public agency; and Age UK Brighton & Hove provided an information and advice, and advocacy service.

60.17 A single non-emergency phone number for the police – 101 – could be used to leave a message with the local neighbourhood policing team. Though if a crime is in progress, or there is fear of a crime, then 999 should be used.

60.18 The meeting discussed pavement access and the use of paved areas outside shops and restaurants. *(It was later confirmed that the Access scrutiny review had been completed and no*

further monitoring was required; suitable policies and procedures were in place. If needed, local Councillors could be contacted regarding pavement obstructions)

60.19 The Environmental Initiatives Team could provide information on their work.

60.20 John Eyles, scrutiny co-ptee, congratulated the officers on progress with older people and community safety.

60.21 OPC welcomed the allocation of lead officer Nahida Shaikh plus 'Community Safety and Older People' updates for future OPC/older people's organisation meetings. **(ACTION: NS)**

60.22 OPC Chair Jack Hazelgrove thanked Councillor Duncan and the officers, welcomed the work in progress and looked forward to hearing updates.

61. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MAY 2012

61.1 Minor amendments were made to the draft minutes at 48.9, 52.2 and 55.5. At 55.1 Pensioner Forum should read 'Pensioner Association.' A revised version would be produced for signing by the Chair.

61.2 The Secretary Mike Bojczuk reported that 'Grey Matters' was now on OPC website(47.2 refers). At 48.5, the 21 August meeting would include The Keep – either a presentation in Kings House or a site visit followed by a meeting in the nearby Bridge Community Education Centre.

61.3 At 48.12 Sally McMahon the Head of Libraries had sent a note 'Each community library also holds local history resources, and in some cases there are touch screen digital displays (eg:Portslade) as part of a Micro Museum installation, so a trip to Jubilee Library is not always necessary for local history material.' Further information and answers to questions would be provided to the next OPC meeting.

61.4 At 51.1, council diaries not being available, the Scrutiny Officer would send to OPC Members the timetable of all public council meetings. OPC Members asked whether printer paper could be provided to them. An OPC Member asked about claiming bus travel expenses for OPC meetings. **(ACTION MvB)**

61.5 At 53 OPC heard of an expression of interest from a potential OPC co-optee, following Colin Carden's standing down as OPC Member.

62. APPLICATION FOR WHO AGE-FRIENDLY CITY STATUS

62.1 Secretary Mike Bojczuk updated OPC on the Age-friendly City Initiative that had been discussed with Strategic Director, Place on 3 May and subsequently at a meeting on 29 May with local older people's organisations, where it had been agreed to take a deputation re an application to WHO, to 19 July Council meeting.

62.2 The aim was to highlight the environmental, social and economic factors that influence the health and wellbeing of older adults; actions achieved, and successes plus future aspirations based on the views of older people.

62.3 Much activity was already under way in Brighton & Hove. MB was bringing this information together within the 8 WHO categories and under each Sustainable Community Strategy heading, and building a business case for a formal application. A draft would be passed around to meet the Council deadlines. **(ACTION MB)**

62.4 A number of people volunteered to form part of the deputation and policy documents such as 'Inclusive Mobility;' and Delivering Dignity' were mentioned.

63. OPC WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE

63.1 For People's Day (July 14th) a rota was agreed. Leaflets and display materials would be available at Kings House Room 128 for collection on Friday 13th July.

63.2 JW gave an update on the main discussion points of the Draft City Plan consultation and handed out copies of the quick reference guides. OPC had two full copies of the draft document for reference.

63.3 The Chair Jack Hazelgrove referred to an e-mail on reductions to the supported bus network. It was agreed that any reductions in bus services were regrettable. There was wide debate around the city and various methods of making your views known eg petitions etc.

63.4 John Eyles would like to be added to the Environment Committee e-distribution list.

63.5 The Mayor would be invited to the next public meeting – 18 September.

64. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

64.1 There was none.

The meeting concluded at 1.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of