

# BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

Date: **28 January 2021**

Time: **4.30pm**

Venue **Virtual**

Members: **All Councillors:**

You are summoned to join a meeting of the BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL to transact the under-mentioned business.

Contact: **Mark Wall**

Head of Democratic Services  
01273 291006  
mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk

## **Public Involvement**

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public.

**Note:** in response to current Government Regulations this meeting is being held as a virtual meeting for councillors and accessible via Teams. Public speaking and engagement opportunities will be made available.

The meeting will also be webcast live to the internet.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk). Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Electronic agendas can also be accessed through our meetings app available through ModernGov: [iOS/Windows/Android](#)

This agenda and all accompanying reports are printed on recycled paper

# AGENDA

## 84 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services Officer preferably before the meeting.

## 85 MINUTES

9 - 46

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the last Council meeting held on the 17 December 2020.

Note: The meeting had to be adjourned prior to the conclusion of the business and a reconvened meeting is due to be held on the 22 January. The minutes of this meeting will be reported to the Council meeting.

Contact Officer: Mark Wall

Tel: 01273 291006

## 86 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

To receive communications from the Mayor.

## 87 COVID-19 UPDATE

With the agreement of the Mayor there will be an oral update from officers and a report of the Director of Public Health for information (to follow).

Contact Officer: Alistair Hill

Tel: 01273 296560

Ward Affected: All Wards

## 88 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS.

Petitions will be presented by Members and/or members of the public to the Mayor at the meeting.

## 89 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

A list of public questions received by the due date of 12noon on the 22 January 2021 will be circulated separately as part of an addendum at the meeting.

## **90 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

A list of deputations received by the due date of 12noon on the 22 January 2021 will be circulated separately as part of an addendum at the meeting.

## **91 PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE**

**47 - 48**

Petitions to be debated at Council. Reports of the Monitoring Officer.

- (1) No Confidence in Brighton & Hove City Council. Lead petitioner  
Katie Brotherton.

*Contact Officer: Mark Wall*

*Tel: 01273 291006*

*Ward Affected: All Wards*

## **92 CALL OVER FOR REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.**

- (a) Call over (item 95) will be read out at the meeting and Members invited to reserve the item for consideration.

- (b) To receive or approve the reports and agree with their recommendations, with the exception of those which have been reserved for discussion.

- (c) Oral questions from Councillors on the Committee reports, which have not been reserved for discussion.

## **93 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.**

**49 - 54**

A list of the written questions submitted by Members has been included in the agenda papers. This will be repeated along with the written answers received and will be taken as read as part of an addendum circulated separately at the meeting.

*Contact Officer: Mark Wall*

*Tel: 01273 291006*

## **6.30 - 7.00PM REFRESHMENT BREAK**

Note: A refreshment break is scheduled for 6.30pm although this may alter slightly depending on how the meeting is proceeding and the view of the Mayor.

## **94 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

**55 - 56**

A list of Councillors who have indicated their desire to ask an oral question at the meeting along with the subject matters has been listed in the agenda papers.

*Contact Officer: Mark Wall*

*Tel: 01273 291006*

## REPORTS FOR DECISION

- 95 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2021/22** **57 - 96**
- Extract from the proceedings of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on the 21 January 2021 (to follow), together with a report of the Acting Chief Finance Officer.
- Contact Officer: Paul Ross-Dale* *Tel: 01273 291969*  
*Ward Affected: All Wards*

## REPORTS REFERRED FOR INFORMATION

### NOTICES OF MOTION

The following Notices of Motion have been submitted by Members for consideration:

- 96 EVICTIONS** **97 - 98**
- Proposed by Councillor Williams on behalf of the Labour and Green Groups.
- 97 SAVE THE UNION LEARNING FUND** **99 - 100**
- Proposed by Councillor Childs on behalf of the Labour Group.
- 98 BONE MARROW, STEM CELL AND ORGAN DONATION** **101 - 102**
- Proposed by Councillor Miller on behalf of the Conservative Group.
- 99 VALUE FOR MONEY SAVINGS** **103 - 104**
- Proposed by Councillor Bagaen on behalf of the Conservative Group.
- 100 COP 26 & WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS** **105 - 106**
- Proposed by Councillor Phillips on behalf of the Green and Labour Groups.
- 101 ROAD DANGER REDUCTION** **107 - 108**
- Proposed by Councillor Hills on behalf of the Green and Labour Groups.
- 102 TRANS INCLUSION** **109 - 110**
- Proposed by Councillor Powell on behalf of the Green, Labour and Conservative Groups.
- 103 SUPPORT FOR EXCLUDED UK AND THOSE EXCLUDED FROM COVID SUPPORT SCHEMES IN THE CITY** **111 - 112**
- Proposed by Councillor Osborne on behalf of the Green Group.

## NOTICES OF MOTION FROM 17 DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING

Note:

The following Notices of Motion from the last Ordinary Council on the 17 December meeting have been included on the agenda for confirmatory vote only.

This is to ensure that the decisions can be taken publicly and recorded due to the problems encountered with the webcast at the last meeting.

<b>104 UNIVERSAL CREDIT</b>	<b>113 - 114</b>
<b>105 ACTION TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF FIREWORKS</b>	<b>115 - 116</b>
<b>106 SUPPORT UNITED NATIONS TPNW - ICAN CITIES APPEAL</b>	<b>117 - 118</b>
<b>107 POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER</b>	<b>119 - 120</b>
<b>108 CLOSE OF MEETING</b>	

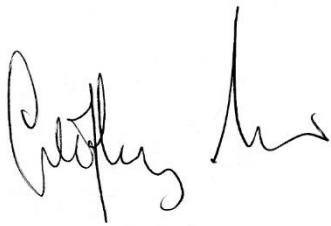
The Mayor will move a closure motion under Procedure Rule 17 to terminate the meeting 4 hours after the beginning of the meeting (excluding any breaks/adjournments).

Note:

- The Mayor will put the motion to the vote and if it is carried will then:-*
  - Call on the Member who had moved the item under discussion to give their right of reply, before then putting the matter to the vote, taking into account the need to put any amendments that have been moved to the vote first;*
  - Each remaining item on the agenda that has not been dealt with will then be taken in the order they appear on the agenda and put to the vote without debate.*

*The Member responsible for moving each item will be given the opportunity by the Mayor to withdraw the item or to have it voted on. If there are any amendments that have been submitted, these will be taken and voted on first in the order that they were received.*
  - Following completion of the outstanding items, the Mayor will then close the meeting.*
- If the motion moved by the Mayor is **not carried** the meeting will continue in the normal way, with each item being moved and debated and voted on.*
- Any Member will still have the opportunity to move a closure motion should they so wish. If such a motion is moved and seconded, then the same procedure as outlined above will be followed.*

*Once all the remaining items have been dealt with the Mayor will close the meeting.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Hove'.

Chief Executive  
Hove Town Hall  
Norton Road  
Hove  
BN3 3BQ

Date of Publication - Wednesday, 20 January 2021

## **ACCESS NOTICE**

**In response to the current situation with Covid-19 and the easing of Regulations, this Committee meeting will be held virtually via Teams and web cast simultaneously.**

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fourth working day before the meeting.

For those members of the public wishing to actively take part in the meeting a link will be emailed so that they can join the meeting.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

## **WEBCASTING NOTICE**

This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. Data collected during this web cast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Therefore, by joining the meeting via the link provided you are deemed to be consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for the purpose of web casting and/or Member training. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured, they should ensure they do not use the skype video facility and provide a static image.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Mark Wall, (01273 291006, email [mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk)) or email [democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk)





**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL****COUNCIL****4.30pm 17 DECEMBER 2020****VIRTUAL****MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Robins (Chair), Mears (Deputy Chair), Allcock, Appich, Atkinson, Bagaean, Barnett, Bell, Brennan, Brown, Childs, Clare, Davis, Deane, Druitt, Ebel, Evans, Fishleigh, Fowler, Gibson, Grimshaw, Hamilton, Heley, Henry, Hill, Hills, Hugh-Jones, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Lloyd, Mac Cafferty, McNair, Miller, Moonan, Nemeth, Nield, O'Quinn, Osborne, Peltzer Dunn, Phillips, Pissaridou, Platts, Powell, Shanks, Simson, C Theobald, Wares, West, Wilkinson, Williams and Yates.

**PART ONE****60 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 60.1 Councillor Platts declared a personal interest in Item 75, as she was a member of the Brighton Cooking Club;
- 60.2 Councillor Childs declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in Item 65 (1) as he owned an electric vehicle and also in Item 66 (3) as he had a child at a Brighton School.
- 60.3 Councillor Grimshaw declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in Item No. 80 as she was a founder member of the Heritage Commission;
- 60.4 No other declarations of interests in matters appearing on the agenda were made.

**61 MINUTES**

- 61.1 The minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on the 22 October were approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

**62 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.**

- 62.1 The Mayor stated that he wished to hold a minute's silence for former mayoress Pat Smith who was consort to David Smith when he was Mayor in 2006 and had recently passed away. He offered the Council's condolences to David who is an Honorary Alderman of the City and his family.

- 62.2 The Mayor then outlined various activities that he had been involved in since the last meeting:
- The Acts of Remembrance across the City went very well, and I would like to thank the Remembrance Committee for helping to ensure that the ceremonies went ahead in very challenging circumstances.
  - I would also like to thank the events team, Ian Taylor and Daniel Watson for their input throughout.
  - Attendance at all the ceremonies was kept to a minimum to adhere to Government guidelines, people were masked and socially distanced.
  - An additional thank you goes to my Chaplaincy the Interfaith Contact Group and Father Martin Poole.
  - I have been kept busy recording messages for various organisations, attending virtual events and meetings. People are becoming very adept at virtual meetings, but it will be a good day when the vaccine is rolled out and we can start socialising again. There are a lot of lonely people out there, which one of my charities Together Co, is working hard to address.
  - I would like to congratulate the Democratic Services Team who won the Mayor's October Charity Quiz night which raised funds for the charities.
- 62.3 Finally, he hoped that all councillors will have read the PR relating to the Mary Clarke Statue appeal which was circulated on the 15 December by the Civic Office. He had hoped to be able to unveil the actual Maquette, but unfortunately this had proved to be too difficult in the current climate.

### **63 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS.**

- 63.1 The Mayor invited the submission of petitions from councillors and members of the public. He reminded the Council that petitions would be referred to the appropriate decision-making body without debate and the person presenting the petition would be invited to attend the meeting to which the petition was referred.
- 63.2 Mr. Madzima presented a petition signed by 8 residents calling on the council to review the decision to cut funding to the Change Grow & Live (FACT) support Group.
- 63.3 The Mayor thanked Mr. Madzima for presenting the petition and noted that it would be referred to the Health & Wellbeing Board for consideration.
- 63.4 Ms. Henery and Ms. Fairbanks presented a petition signed by 1,445 residents calling on the council to adopt an operational Climate and Biodiversity plan by April 2021.
- 63.5 The Mayor thanked Ms. Henery and Ms. Fairbanks for presenting the petition and noted that it would be referred to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration.
- 63.6 Mr. Jackson presented a petition signed by 522 residents calling on the council to halt any extension to the cycle lane along the Old Shoreham Road and to undertake a consultation exercise to determine what action should be taken.
- 63.7 The Mayor thanked Mr. Jackson for presenting the petition and noted that it would be referred to the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee for consideration.

63.8 The Mayor noted that there were no other petitions to be presented.

**64 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

64.1 The Mayor reported that 5 written questions had been received from members of the public and invited Nigel Smith to address the council.

64.2 Nigel Smith asked the following question; Either myself or another campaigner asks a question about the A259 at every meeting of the full council and ETS. To date, nobody at B&HCC seems remotely interested in investigating our concerns about dodgy statistics and incompetent consultants nor do they seem concerned about why congestion and pollution are increasing despite a drop in vehicles.

Are we wasting our time?

64.3 Councillor Heley replied; Thank you for your question Mr Smith. The opportunity for members of the public to ask lead councillors questions at public meetings like this is a really important way in which we can enable people to highlight local issues and get involved in the council's business. Ward councillors will also welcome, listen to, and do their best to help with local issues.

When you or other people have asked a question about the A259, which I believe you have been doing for some 5 years now. I am sure that councillors will have provided a full and considered response wherever possible. We do want to tackle congestion and pollution across the city by increasing sustainable and public transport use, managing traffic and reducing vehicle trips. Raising questions at council meetings about your concerns can also help to increase awareness of these issues amongst local people, and could help encourage changes in travel behaviour. So, on this and other occasions, I think your time has been well spent.

64.4 Nigel Smith asked the following supplementary question;

Which, a leading insurance company has ranked the A259 from the Marina to New Haven as the 7<sup>th</sup> most dangerous stretch of road in the whole of the UK, that is a fact. All the meetings in the world won't reduce carbon emissions, actions will. To remedy this you really have to understand the issues. My question is simply – do you? And if you do why are the emissions for traffic not going down year on year?

64.5 Councillor Heley replied; Yes I do fully understand the issues and I believe emissions aren't going down because we are not providing enough safe infrastructure which we are addressing to move to sustainable transport and people are still choosing to drive too much.

64.6 The Mayor thanked Nigel Smith for his questions and invited Rob Shepherd to address the council.

64.7 Rob Shepherd thanked the Mayor and asked the following question; The mandatory 5-year review of the City Plan and its Sustainability Appraisal, lacks a Transport Assessment Update for the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The last annual monitoring

Transport Assessment Update was in 2014. With the well documented unplanned rise in congestion since 2014, it is very unlikely the City Plan's required housing developments can now be achieved sustainably, which invalidates City Plan Part 2 unless it addresses this.

When will you perform the obligatory Transport Assessment Update and publish it for consultation?

- 64.8 Councillor Heley replied; A Transport Technical Paper was published earlier this year to support the proposed Submission City Plan Part 2. This includes an analysis of the impact of development proposed in the Plan on the strategic road network. The reason was to ensure that the conclusions and measures set out in the Strategic Transport Assessment that supports City Plan Part 1 (CPP1) remain valid. It concluded that the measures remain robust with amendments to some of the traffic levels and measures. The Technical Paper can be viewed on the website.

In terms of the review of City Plan Part 1, the National Planning Policy Framework requires policies to be reviewed at least once every five years. City Plan Part 1 was adopted in March 2016 and a report on the need for an update to the Plan's policies will be brought to TECC Committee in March 2021. Should a decision be made to proceed with an update to the policies in City Plan Part 1, this is expected to include an updated assessment of the transport implications of future planned growth. This would be published alongside a consultation draft of updated policies.

The Council recently published a Local Development Scheme which sets out an expected timetable for the progression of a revised City Plan Part 1 with the first formal stage of consultation anticipated to take place in late 2023.

- 64.9 Rob Shepherd asked the following supplementary question; It is in the territory of there is a big difference in monitoring/measuring congestion than actually just measuring traffic volumes. In previous answers you have said that the local A259 queues and congestion were last measured in 2018 and that an emergency bus lane was recommended on the basis of traffic management and analysis, having found out that you were incorrectly advised on both accounts and also not warned that the disastrous temporary A259 bike lane at the Pier was not viable, what actions are you taking to ensure you are better informed about our vital transport infrastructure so the City Plan's target new housing can still be built sustainably?
- 64.10 Councillor Heley replied; I won't give much of a reply because you are implying that officers have told me incorrect information, which I am not very happy with, but we can carry on the conversation on email.
- 64.11 The Mayor thanked Rob Shepherd for his questions and invited Jon Paul to address the council.
- 64.12 Jon Paul McCarthy asked the following question; Over the last year Saltdean has created a large group of sea swimmers, surfers and SUP. It would be amazing to have a facility for this group on the beach or even just the permission so we can crowdfund the cost of a hut. There is also plenty of space for at least 50 new huts and chalets in Saltdean with residents ready to purchase and maintain their own huts.

Please would the council advise whether new beach huts and chalets will be erected on Saltdean seafront in the near future - either council or privately owned - and if our swim/surf group can get to the top of the waiting list?

- 64.13 Councillor Ebel replied; Thank you Mr McCarthy for your question and it is positive that there is such interest for people to actively use the sea to the benefit of their health and well-being.

A report on the provision of beach chalets is due to be considered by the TECC Committee in January. The report will include a recommendation that a study is undertaken to consider the feasibility of the provision of additional beach chalets and huts on the city's coastline. This study is necessary before any indication could be given whether it would be possible for additional provision to be made at any location.

The Council does not give priority to any individuals or groups on the waiting lists for beach chalets, the reason is simple, many people have been on these waiting lists for many, many years and for reasons of 'fairness and transparency' we cannot give priority to anyone. So, we have to be simply work according to the waiting list.

- 64.14 Jon Paul McCarthy asked the following supplementary question, I am more interested in the permission to get a club house, if we had permission to put something there, we could crowd fund the hut itself. The other thing was the leases on the huts I think are 20 years which seems like a very long time as I have only ever seen one hut open there and I have lived here for 10 years.

- 64.15 Councillor Ebel replied; In terms of permissions you are welcome to email us and we can discuss with officers, obviously there are more demands than there is space, but I am happy to put you in contact with our council officers and then the leases will be part of the report that is coming to the January TECC Committee. There are two types of lease, one is indefinite, and one is a limited lease. I can't comment on how much beach chalets are used but we are looking into a feasibility study to provide additional beach huts and beach chalets but that will take a bit of time because we want to do it properly.

- 64.16 The Mayor thanked Jon Paul McCarthy for his questions and invited Jim Deans to address the council.

- 64.17 Jim Deans asked the following question; In 2018 and again in 2019 council all political parties thanked Sussex Homeless Support for the work done supporting Homeless, Rough Sleepers and those suffering poverty. 2020 in the first week of the covid-19 lock down we stepped up while other services closed their doors, from 1 street kitchen to 8 a week, yet council turned down our application for funding, why?

- 64.18 Councillor Gibson replied; I agree this is really disappointing and what I can do is read out the response of the 'all party' Member's Advisory Group who made the decision on the bids for the Community Funds and they agreed, following the recommendation made by officers in respect of the bid from Sussex Homeless Support, Brighton & Hove City Council Commissioning Manager, Rough Sleepers & Single Homeless Support reports that TVs and Kindles have been purchased by the council that radios that Sussex Homeless Support seek have been donated by Tesco's, 200 hot meals and pack lunches are prepared and delivered by Brighton & Hove City Council each day and toiletries have been donated by public and retail. Additionally travel costs

can be met from within the existing budget. It is recommended not to fund this bid. They then added that they are sorry for this disappointing news.

So that was the response which you have probably seen before, I fully appreciate that you feel bitterly disappointed you must feel and you make the case very strongly about all the things that Sussex Homeless Support do and that you feel that it is unfair and certainly I am very aware of the work that your group does and your tireless efforts, always coming to meetings full of ideas and how to solve homelessness, if only Brighton & Hove Council and others could get their act together and your contribution is so appreciated.

I also think that the pods project that you are developing is really brilliant and, having visited the pods I am very excited that this could be a long term solution for homelessness and, as you know, I am working with you and the Community Land Trust to try and do something that will be lasting beyond the alleviation, which is providing food. I was also particularly impressed by the homeless bus that you got going last year before we had the current situation that everyone is in which obviously changes things and makes things a lot easier because 7 days a week we are now looking to offer accommodation for rough sleepers which is brilliant really that we can do that.

64.19 Jim Deans asked the following supplementary question; I refer to the list of successful applicants, I am not saying that a website for uploading music, when the biggest platforms are free and handing out thousands of pounds for Zoom licences when Zoom can be used for free are a waste of public money and that the organisations to receive money are not deserving, but I think feeding people on the street and Sussex Homeless Support are equal in the city in value and so I ask today does Sussex Homeless Support still have the support of the councillors?

64.20 Councillor Gibson replied, I am very keen on the pods project I want to work with you together and I want the council to find ways of being acceptable to work with the community which is in our joint programme better than have been done so far so I am committed to working with community groups, particularly groups like yours that are very good at fund raising, thankfully, because of this point in the decision with the grants.

64.21 The Mayor thanked Jim Deans for his questions and invited Keeley Bignal to address the council.

64.22 Keeley Bignal thanked the Mayor and asked the following question; This question is regarding the proposals to construct 600-700 flats on the site of Brighton Gasworks. Right now, people who live near to gasworks developments elsewhere – which are being developed by the very same developers proposing to build here in Brighton - are suffering damage to their health. At Southall in London, residents report asthma, breathing problems, nausea, chest pain, and even cancer and are pursuing legal action. We know that the Brighton gasworks site is contaminated with dangerous toxins including asbestos, lead and benzo(a)pyrene.

Will the Council prioritise the health of its residents over the need for more homes?

64.23 Councillor Hugh-Jones replied, I appreciate your concerns and fears. I can assure you the protection of residents' health and safety remains a top priority for the city council – particularly when it comes to remediating a contaminated site like the Brighton Gas Works.

This is also a site which should be capable of being remediated safely and that we'd like to see redeveloped for much needed homes and jobs. As site remediation is highly technical and regulated, it is licensed and overseen by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for the Environment Agency.

All planning applications must be determined in line with those local and national planning policy and guidance and relevant planning legislation, this includes environmental impact assessments and the impact of a development on human health.

A future planning application to redevelop the Gasworks site will be required to include detailed evidence in line with national guidance on Land contamination - risk management - published as recently as October 2020. This evidence will be scrutinised by officers of the city council as well as the Environment Agency and HSE to ensure public health is protected.

This evidence will be published for residents to scrutinise and comment on as well.

Finally, any future planning application will be carefully considered by officers and the Planning Committee. An approval decision would require the developer to comply with stringent planning conditions to address matters such as safe land remediation. These, then would have to be satisfied before any development could commence on the site.

The applicants have submitted an environmental impact assessment scoping report that happened during the summer and key internal and external consultees have been consulted and provided a scoping opinion. Both documents are now available on the council website so I urge you to have a look if you have not already done so. You may also be interested to know that the deputation that came to last Full Council on this same subject has been noted and passed to the planning service and will be dealt with as a representation on any future planning application at that location.

64.24 Keeley Bignal asked the following supplementary question; As a local resident, and I also have a background as an environmental scientist and have worked in air quality and undertaken research in some of these really nasty carcinogens, I can't really express how concerned I am about release of these toxins into the atmosphere, particularly given that the nature of the proposed development with high rise and deep foundations and excavations. I worry that my little boy can play safely in the garden, I worry for my neighbour's baby that has just been born, my neighbours at the end of the garden. People do not want to live their retirement not being able to breathe and in fear of being able to open their windows. Other developments have also had to comply with this long list of regulations and the evidence suggests that it hasn't worked.

Do you not agree that the safest place for these lethal toxins is to keep them locked up where they are?

64.25 Councillor Hugh-Jones stated that she was not expert and would have to defer to those who are. She suggested that given Keeley's expertise in the area they could discuss matters further outside of the meeting.

64.26 The Mayor thanked Keely Bignal for her questions and noted that this had concluded the item.

**65 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

- 65.1 The Mayor reported that two deputations had been received from members of the public and that he would invite the spokesperson to introduce their deputation and for the relevant Chair to respond. He noted that 15minutes were set aside for the consideration of deputations.
- 65.2 The Mayor welcomed Venetia Carter to the meeting and invited her to address the Council.
- 65.3 Ms. Carter thanked the Mayor and referred to the deputation and outlined the concerns in relation to the climate change and biodiversity emergency facing the city and asking what actions the council would take to address these.
- 65.4 Councillor Heley thanked Ms Carter for the deputation and stated that the Council was working towards publishing a carbon neutral plan in March 2021 and the findings of the first citizens' assembly were due to be reported to the Environment, Transport & Sustainability and Policy & Resources Committees in January.
- 65.5 The Mayor thanked Ms. Carter for joining the meeting and noted that the deputation would be referred to the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee for consideration. The persons forming the deputation would be invited to attend the meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action to be taken or proposed in relation to the matter set out in the deputation.
- 65.6 The Mayor welcomed David Thomas to the meeting and invited him to address the Council.
- 65.7 Mr. Thomas thanked the Mayor and referred to the deputation and outlined the concerns in relation to the use of SWEP and ensuring that homeless people were able to access the service during times of need.
- 65.8 Councillor Gibson thanked Mr Thomas for the deputation and stated that it was difficult to give a full response in view of the constraints that related to the judicial review. He hoped that a more comprehensive response could be given at the Housing Committee but wanted to confirm that the Council was committed to supporting homeless people and to work within the law to enable them to find accommodation.
- 65.9 The Mayor thanked Mr. Thomas for joining the meeting and noted that the deputation would be referred to the Housing Committee for consideration. The persons forming the deputation would be invited to attend the meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action to be taken or proposed in relation to the matter set out in the deputation.

**66 PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE**

- 66.1 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 three such petitions and would take each in turn. However, he also noted that first petition, concerning no



confidence in Brighton & Hove Council had been withdrawn due to the petitioner being unable to take part in the meeting at the present time.

- 66.2 The Mayor then invited Sarah Whitehead to present the petition concerning the need for the Hove Greyhound Stadium to be closed.
- 66.3 Sarah Whitehead thanked the Mayor and stated that the petition which had been signed by nearly 7,000 people was aimed at stopping the exploitation of greyhounds and puppies that don't make the grade. She noted that the majority of dogs that ended their careers either lost their life or were sent abroad and that rescue centres were packed with dogs that had finished their running lives. She hoped that the council would support her and those that had signed the petition and would call on the owners of the stadium to stop this cruel sport and close the stadium.
- 66.4 Councillor Hills thanked Sarah for the petition and stated that she would like to see the end of such exploitation and that it had no place in a caring city. However, it was not in the remit of the council to be able to do anything other than to recognise the level of support that existed for the petition.
- 66.5 Councillors Brown and O'Quinn spoke on the petition and noted that charity events were held at the stadium and that the actual sport was not illegal or unregulated. It was also recognised that the protests had an impact on residents and if the stadium closed it would have impact on jobs.
- 66.6 The Mayor thanked Sarah Whitehead for presenting the petition and then sought the Council's agreement to put the recommendation to the vote which was agreed. He therefore called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn and each of the Independent Members.
- 66.7 Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in favour of the recommendation to note the petition and this was confirmed by the Green Group Members;
- 66.8 Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the recommendation to note the petition and this was confirmed by the Labour Group Members;
- 66.9 Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative were against the recommendation to note the petition and this was confirmed by the Conservative Group Members;
- 66.10 Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendation to note the petition;
- 66.11 Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she wished to abstain from voting on the recommendation;
- 66.12 Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against the recommendation to note the petition;
- 66.13 Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendation to note the petition.

- 66.14 The Mayor then invited Emma Daniel to present the petition concerning the costs of secondary school uniform in Brighton and Hove.
- 66.15 Emma Daniel thanked the Mayor and stated that there was need to encourage schools to review the costs of uniforms and the number of items that were required to make-up a uniform that were branded and only available from a restricted number of suppliers. She also felt that there should be an upper cost limit for uniforms and hoped that the Council would work with the petitioners to get an agreed change across the city's schools.
- 66.16 Councillor Clare thanked Emma for her petition and noted that the final responsibility for determining the costs of uniforms and their supply lay with the various schools and their governing bodies. She acknowledged the work of her predecessor and that of Councillor Knight as the previous Deputy Chair of the CYPS Committee in seeking to poverty-proof the school day and encourage schools to address the costs of school uniforms. She also noted that the pandemic had impacted on the situation and hoped that different options such as having second-hand uniform available through the schools could be taken forward.
- 66.17 Councillor Allcock moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which sought to reassure the community that the Council wanted to work with Secondary Heads to help parents and to address the high cost of uniforms.
- 66.18 Councillor Hamilton formally seconded the amendment and noted that more parents were now governors of schools and hoped that they could also help to influence change across the city.
- 66.19 Councillors Bell, Knight and Hills spoke on the petition and the amendment and agreed that the matter needed to be looked at with a view to reaching a uniform cost for school uniform across the schools in the city.
- 66.20 The Mayor thanked Ms. Daniel for joining the meeting and presenting the petition and noted that an amendment had been moved.
- 66.21 The Mayor then sought the Council's agreement to put the recommendations as amended to the vote which was agreed and he therefore called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn and each of the Independent Members.
- 66.22 Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in favour of the recommendations as amended and this was confirmed by the Green Group Members;
- 66.23 Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the recommendations as amended and this was confirmed by the Labour Group Members;
- 66.24 Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative were against the recommendations as amended and this was confirmed by the Conservative Group Members;
- 66.25 Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendations as amended;

66.26 Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendations as amended;

66.27 Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting in favour of the recommendations as amended;

66.28 Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendations as amended.

66.29 The Mayor confirmed that the recommendations as amended had been carried.

**66.30 RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the petition be noted and referred to the Children, Young People & Skills Committee for consideration; and
- (2) That officers prepare a report for the Children, Young People & Skills Committee in March 2021 that:
  - details the uniform policy and associated costs for a child in each local authority secondary school, voluntary sector secondary school and secondary academy in our city;
  - describes the support currently available for any families experiencing economic hardship and struggling to ensure compliance with the uniform policy for their school; and
  - provides options to further reduce the financial burden of school uniform requirements on disadvantaged families (to be explored in partnership with school head teachers and governors).

**67 TO RECEIVE NOMINATIONS FOR THE MAYOR AND THE DEPUTY MAYOR-ELECT FOR 2021/22**

67.1 The Mayor noted that the next item was to nominate the Mayor-elect and Deputy Mayor-elect for 2021/22 and sought nominations for both roles.

67.2 Councillor Platts proposed that Councillor Robins should be the Mayor-elect for 2021/22 and this was seconded by Councillor Allcock.

67.3 Councillor Miller proposed that Councillor Mears should be the Deputy Mayor-elect for 2021/22 and this was seconded by Councillor Bell.

67.4 The Mayor noted that no other nominations were made for either role and therefore put the following nominations of Councillor Alan Robins as Mayor-elect and Councillor Mary Mears as Deputy Mayor-elect for 2021/22 to the vote which was agreed unanimously.

**67.5 RESOLVED:**

- (1) That Councillor Robins be nominated as Mayor-elect for 2021/22.

(2) That Councillor Mears be nominated as Deputy Mayor-elect for 2021/22.

## **68 CALL OVER FOR REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.**

### **(a) Callover**

68.1 The following items on the agenda were reserved for discussion:

- Item 72 - An Update on the Economic Strategy for Brighton & Hove
- Item 73 - Covid-19 Recovery & Renewal Programme Update
- Item 74 - Brexit Resilience & Planning

### **(b) Receipt and/or Approval of Reports**

68.2 The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the following reports on the agenda with the recommendations therein had been approved and adopted:

- Item 71 - Review of Statement of Licensing Policy – Consultation Response Report 2020

### **(c) Oral Questions from Members**

68.3 The Mayor noted that there were no oral questions.

## **69 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.**

69.1 The Mayor confirmed that written questions from Members and the replies from the appropriate Councillor were taken as read by reference to the list included in the addendum which had been circulated prior to the meeting as detailed below:

### **(1) Councillor Platts:**

69.2 Will the Council consider improving the facilities, interior and area around Damson Block, Bowring Way on the Bristol Estate in East Brighton Ward?

This block needs some basic decoration internally and the public areas need to be upgraded. Lockdown has highlighted a poor internet connection to some parts of the block which is not strong enough to stream or pick up Freeview television as well as making it difficult for households to work from home or access Council services online. There is no TV aerial because that was removed. Residents would like to have fibre optic cable brought into the block.

The area around Damson block also needs serious attention. Cars and vans are frequently parked illegally and contractors' vehicles have been parked on the grassed areas over many months now. This has churned up the grass making it muddy and unattractive. This area is the residents garden and it is not acceptable for contractors to keep claiming the Council has allowed them to park there. Internally, the bin and storage areas have been reported several times recently for overflowing rubbish and drug taking. The residents of this block want the Council to take some action on

improvements; to stop illegal parking and to have a named housing officer responsible for each block so that actions needed can be noted and tracked.

**Reply from Councillor Gibson, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

- 69.3 Thank you for your questions on this block. I am sorry to hear of the concerns raised around Damson.

Damson is not currently programmed for any planned internal decorations. However, our surveyors will visit the block and review the condition and identify any repairs that need to be carried out in the short term.

I'm sorry to hear about the issues with parking. Our Car Parks & Garages team have now begun enforcement in front of Damson to address this. We are also reviewing whether further enforcement is needed in addition to this. We will be reseeding any grassed areas that contractors are using for parking associated with current work on the estate.

The block does have an up to date aerial system that is available for residents to receive both television and broadband services. Following your question, I have asked officers to check the system is operating correctly. We don't have any issues currently listed with the operation of the system. If there are any problems residents can contact our Housing Repairs Help Desk and a repair will be raised to our aerial contractor.

I am sorry to hear about the issues with anti-social behaviour in the block. Our officers will look into this and review what actions we can take to address any issues arising.

Residents who do have any concerns with the block can access Housing support through either the Housing Customer Services team or the Housing Repairs Help Desk. Both services are operating and are the quickest way for residents to report any issues. We have found that this approach offers a more responsive and comprehensive way of dealing with issues that may arise than a named housing officer being responsible for each block. In particular, should that officer not be available or move on as often happens.

**(2) Councillor Platts:**

- 69.4 Parking at Black Rock and on Madeira Drive - Can the Council confirm the amount of car parking spaces in Black Rock car park; to what extent these spaces have been under-used since the re-opening of Madeira Drive for car parking and the amount of parking on Madeira Drive itself?

Can you list separately the amount of revenue generated by use of on street parking in Madeira Drive and the Black Rock car park for the same period plus the parking charges per hour?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 69.5 There are 61 spaces in the Black Rock Car Park and although this is underused since mid-October 2020 when Madeira Drive reopened this is consistent, seasonal behaviour.

Since reopening Madeira Drive currently has approximately 230 paid parking spaces which was reduced from 300 paid spaces following the introduction of the cycle lane on the south side. The parking on the north side is currently being reviewed as phase two of the reopening.

Income from Black Rock Car Park is £3,528 from 1,445 transactions since 18th October to the end of the first week of December while Madeira Drive is £57,175 income from 12,203 transactions. The parking charges are outlined in the Parking Annual report 19/20 which can be found on the Council website. It's a very useful read. Changes made for this financial year and implemented in April / May 2020 were outlined at Budget Council in February 2020 and can be found in the Committee papers.

### **(3) Councillor Allcock:**

- 69.6 Labour was pleased to work cross party with the Greens to include School Streets as part of the Emergency Traffic Measures introduced during the Covid pandemic and we welcome the Administrations continuation of this scheme. The Council has said that the scheme will be reviewed after six months and that the impact of the measures will be monitored. Please can you provide details on:
- What form the review will take and what factors will be used to assess future viability;
  - What plans are in place to move to a more permanent School Street arrangement at the schools where the scheme is judged to be successful; and
  - How the schools involved and the fantastic School Street volunteers who work in all weathers are being updated on progress.

### **Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 69.7 Through the Emergency School Streets Programme, nine closures have been implemented outside the city's schools since September, with the fantastic support and goodwill of parents, carers and community volunteers. Of those nine schools, four are currently continuing, having secured enough regular volunteers to operate a closure with limited council support.

The wider project was paused at the October half term so that we could assess the trial closures and look at how to deliver School Streets closures over the long term. To date, Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders have been used to close roads during the school run and physical barriers have supported enforcement of the closure. This has meant that volunteers have been required to put in place and then marshal barriers at school closures during drop off and pick up times.

While we are extremely grateful to the local community for volunteering their time to support these closures, we recognise that for School Streets to be sustainable in the long term, we also need to look at where physical measures could work. Plans are already underway for physical measures to be implemented at Brunswick Primary, Downs Junior and St Luke's Primary schools by the end of March 2021.

We know that there is demand across the city for School Streets closures and are committed to delivering it to as many schools as possible. Officers are now looking at how closures can be implemented using physical measures, with the support of volunteers, as part of a future programme. Assessment criteria for School Streets is already in place and this would be used in any future programme to assess the viability of closures.

We will make sure that any changes to the way School Streets is being implemented is communicated to schools and to volunteers at the appropriate time.

**(4) Councillor Fishleigh - E-Scooters on the Undercliff between The Marina and Saltdean:**

- 69.8 Please will the council erect large signs at all five access points onto the undercliff as well as by the three cafes on the seafront so that everyone knows that it is against the law to ride e-scooters down there. There are two access points in Saltdean, one in Rottingdean, one in Roedean and one at the marina.

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 69.9 Scooters are still illegal in the UK on the public highway except on private land or in licensed trials where Local authorities are working with hire operators. BHCC is not taking part in these because of their potential for misuse in areas where they are prohibited as well as concerns around safety, access, street clutter and sustainability. Misuse of e-scooters by private owners is a matter for Sussex Police who will prioritise enforcement according to available resources as they see fit.

As you will be aware, the Council introduced additional signing along the Undercliff two years ago following requests from ward members, and any additional signing would be counterproductive and increase clutter to what is a very scenic environment. Further sign clutter won't resolve the issue of the illegal use of scooters.

**(5) Councillor Fishleigh - Cityclean Service over Christmas and New Year:**

- 69.10 What measures have been put in place to ensure that both communal and household recycling and general waste bins will be emptied on a regular basis over Christmas and New Year and that we will not see a repeat of the overflowing bins and non-collections experienced last December, January and February?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 69.11 Changes have been made to collection dates this year to account for collections affected by Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

These changes were published in Argus Christmas TV Guide at the weekend. A news release detailing these changes will be published shortly and will be available on the

council website. It has been published in Homing In and will be shared on social media platforms.

Arrangements will be made to empty on-street bins on Christmas Eve to provide capacity for the festive period.

We encourage residents to manage their waste responsibly and minimise the additional waste produced by thinking about their purchasing.

If a resident has too much waste to fit in their bin, they can take it to a recycling point (if it's recyclable), take it to one of the Household Waste Recycling Sites, or hang on to it until their next collection.

Fly-tipping of waste is illegal, and anyone caught will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

**(6) Councillor Fishleigh - Additional Communal Recycling and General Waste Bins:**

69.12 Please can we have extra communal general waste and recycling bins in the following areas in Rottingdean Coastal over Christmas and New Year?

These are areas with hundreds of flats and fewer car users: Sussex Square, The Arundels, Rottingdean recycling point, Saltdean recycling points x 2.

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

69.13 I appreciate more waste is generated at Christmas.

However, we cannot provide additional bins as it is not possible to provide extra bins to all areas of the city – extra staff, vehicles and bins will be required.

As I have already mentioned, people need to manage their waste responsibly and minimise the additional waste produced by thinking about their purchasing.

If a resident has too much waste to fit in their bin, they can take it to a recycling point (if it's recyclable), take it to one of the Household Waste Recycling Sites, or hang on to it until their next collection.

Fly-tipping of waste is illegal, and anyone caught will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

**(7) Councillor Barnett - Benfield Valley:**

69.14 Brighton & Hove City Council's Property Team, after extensive research, has advised the following:

*That there is nothing to suggest from the property register that the lease dated 27/10/92 made between Hove Borough Council & Sainsbury Plc has been varied or that a*



*sublease for 7 years or more has been granted (there is no requirement to register a lease for 7 years or less at the land registry).*

The 1992 lease includes the following provisions of note:

(13) COVENANT TO KEEP VACANT LAND IN PROPER ORDER

To keep the land not occupied by buildings in a clean well cultivated and proper condition so far as is appropriate to the actual use of the Premises and so as not to cause injury to the environment of the area or any adjoining land and to forthwith comply at its own expense with any notice of a relevant authority whether served on the Tenant or the Landlord reasonably requiring the abatement of any such injury.

(14) TO PRESERVE TREES ETC

To keep trees shrubs and hedging on the Premises in good order and condition so far as reasonably possible and properly tended cultivated in accordance with the principles of good husbandry and pruned or trimmed and to replace all losses PROVIDED that so to do shall not interfere unreasonably with the use of the Premises for outdoor recreational and leisure purposes AND PROVIDED FURTHER that the same quantities of trees shrubs and hedging as at the date hereof shall be maintained hereafter and any revised layout thereof shall (before removal of the existing trees and shrubs and hedging) first be agreed with the Landlord which shall act reasonably in reaching such agreement with the Tenant

(16) NOT TO MAKE ALTERATIONS OR ADDITIONS

Not to erect any new or additional buildings on the Premises or any part thereof or make any alteration or addition whatsoever to the exterior of the buildings without the Landlord's written consent (such consent not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed) PROVIDED that it shall be unreasonable for the Landlord to withhold consent with regard to any application for consent to build or to make alterations or additions to buildings used for or ancillary to a use permitted by Clause 3(8) hereof.

(18) NOT TO ASSIGN ETC WITHOUT CONSULTATION/CONSENT AND ASSIGNMENT ETC TO A COMPANY

The Tenant covenants with the Landlord not to share possession or occupation or grant licence to use or grant third party rights over the Premises or any part or parts thereof

According to the official copy of register of title (Land Registry) the following information relating to the current tenants Benfield Investments Limited regarding the title absolute:

- (27/09/2004) PROPRIETOR: BENFIELD INVESTMENTS LIMITED (Co. Regn. No. 5121561) of 73 Church Road, Hove E Sussex BN3 2BB.
- RESTRICTION: Except under an order of the registrar no disposition of the land edged blue on the filed plan or any part thereof made before **12 May 2080** is to be registered without the consent of Capital and Regional Estates Limited or their successors in title in accordance with clauses 7.1 and 7.2 of the Transfer dated 12 May 2000 referred to in the Charges Register.
- The price stated to have been paid on 10 September 2004 was £625,000 According to an Option Agreement lodged with the Land Registry dated 25/07/2016:

- Benfield Investments Limited signed an Option Agreement with Futureform Global Investments Limited offering the land for development of **814 dwellings** with a purchase price of **£25,236,750**

Given the information above, including the confirmation that the 1992 lease is still in effect, I have the following questions:

1. Has the Tenant Benfield Investments Limited broken section 3 clause 14 of the lease above by clearing a large area of land, as reported by the Argus on 5 April 2017? <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/15203948.amp/>
2. Has the Tenant Benfield Investments Limited broken section 3 clause 16 of the lease by signing an option agreement with Futureform Global Investments in 2016?
3. Has the Tenant Benfield Investments broken section 3 clause 18 of the lease by subletting the land to Brighton Footgolf?

### **Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

- 69.15 The works undertaken in 2017 were at the request of the council to ensure that the demised area was maintained and well cultivated in accordance with the provisions of the lease. The works were discussed in advance with council officers with regard to the lease and also council planning officers to ensure compliance with planning requirements. The tenant did not breach the lease when undertaking these works.

With reference to clause 18(b) an option to purchase would be a third party right, however, the option agreement [a copy of which is attached for your records, please refer to clause 10] does make clear that any sale/assignment of the lease, which is what the option guaranteed, would be subject to the prior consent of the Landlord. The landlord in this context is the council. Therefore, we do not consider that the courts would consider this to be a material breach of the lease as the developer was aware that the council would need to give final consent to enable the option to be effective. In addition, the option to purchase has expired. Had the developer wished to proceed with the option, they would have needed to do so by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020, which was the long stop date for the agreement [see clause 4.5].

There has been no subletting and therefore no breach of the lease. Brighton Footgolf are contracted run the operation on behalf of Benfield Investments. There has been no passing of responsibilities to Brighton Footgolf – all responsibilities and rights remain with Benfield Investments.

### **(8) Councillor Barnett - Benfield Valley:**

- 69.16 At the last council meeting I asked you the following oral question: I refer to the council land comprising Benfield Valley Golf Course that I understand is currently on a long-lease.

Residents in my ward have since 2006 had to fight against proposal after proposal for housing developments on this land.

I recently met with one of the leaseholders who said he would be happy to enter negotiations with the council to discuss the council potentially buying back the long-lease.

Will the Leader of this Green Council consider buying back the long-lease and making the land part of the South Downs National Park to end these perpetual battles and protect it for ever from development for the benefit of our City.

Thank you.

In your response you said you would investigate the matter and write back to me. I have not yet received the response promised.

Please could you write back to me so that I can advise residents in my ward?

Please can we have extra communal general waste and recycling bins in the following areas in Rottingdean Coastal over Christmas and New Year?

These are areas with hundreds of flats and fewer car users: Sussex Square, The Arundels, Rottingdean recycling point, Saltdean recycling points x 2.

### **Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

69.17 Following the question above Council officers contacted the long lessees to establish whether they were willing to enter into discussions on the surrender of the lease.

My apologies for the delay in providing a response, the long lessee has only recently responded. The long lessee is committed to retaining their interest in the site in the short term and therefore discussions with the council regarding the surrender of whole or part will not be progressed at this stage.

### **(9) Councillor Simson - South Down Riding School:**

69.18 Please can I have the information asked of the Chief Executive of the Council on the 8th October with a reminder sent on the 19th October? Has Southdown Riding School, at the top of Bear Road, been informed by the council, as the landlord, that they have to vacate the premises next year and is this with the intention of building on the land as one of the urban fringe sites that residents are fighting so hard to stop the development of in City Plan part 2?

### **Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

69.19 Our agents Savills have held discussions and onsite meetings with the tenant of South Downs Riding School following a complaint about the premises being used for and as an illegal waste transfer station. The expiry date of the lease is 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and given the ongoing review of land use management policy and the need to incorporate changes an early indication was given to the tenant that the council might seek to terminate the lease, albeit formal notice has not yet been served. No consideration has been given to the future use of the site beyond tidying up the yard and allowing regeneration of the land. Any longer-term options will be presented to the Asset Management Board and/or any future advisory panel borne out of the council's Whole Estate Plan.

**(10) Councillor Simson - Empty Council Houses:**

69.20 Please can you tell me how many empty council homes there are in the city currently, how long the longest one has been empty for, and why the Council is ripping out perfectly good fittings from vacated homes at enormous expense when it was agreed several years ago this wasn't going to be done anymore?

**Reply from Councillor Gibson, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

69.21 As of 9 December, there are currently 254 empty council homes, 95 of these need major work, and 72 have been advertised on Homemove. The longest empty property has been vacant since 01/03/20.

I would be concerned if we were ripping out perfectly good fittings at enormous expense and would welcome more information on situations where it has been reported that this has happened so I can look into this in more detail.

There are some circumstances where we may take out fittings.

Fittings may be removed from an empty property where they are non-standard and will have significant implications for future maintenance. This can include where a tenant has carried out work themselves, for example non-compliant doors, or where we can't maintain or ensure health & safety standards are have been met, for example decking or fitted appliances.

Going forward, as part of achieving our commitment to net zero carbon by 2030 we will re-examine the balance between repairs and replacement while of course adhering to the council's Decent Homes Standard.

**(11) Councillor Mears - Update on Re[airs & Maintenance to Council Housing Stock:**

69.22 Following on from a report - *Update on Repairs & Maintenance to Council Housing Stock* - that went to the Housing Committee on the 16th September 2020, why was the internal Audit report presented to Audit and Standards committee on the 27th November 2020 never been shown to the Housing Committee on the 16th September or the 18th November committee meeting?

The Housing Committee has Delegated Powers under the Council's Constitution. Therefore, this also raises a number of other questions:

1. After spending £9.3m the procurement reports states that Service Management has identified that it requires additional resources to deliver a full service. How much extra is needed, and when will this be reported to Housing committee as this is paid from the HRA Budget?
2. The conclusion in the October 2020 report states that only Partial Assurance can be given on the operation of the new service and related systems. When will Full Assurance be given for the service?
3. Audit found that the service has not yet contracted with enough subcontractors to meet the needs of the service. When will this be put in place?

4. The internal Audit report includes eight high priority actions for improvement, which have been agreed with management. Please give details of all eight actions needed.

Please give details of the medium priority actions needed for improvement with the service.

### **Reply from Councillor Hugh-Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

- 69.23 A summary of each audit report undertaken is reported to Audit and Standards Committee as soon as it is practical to do so. Reports do not routinely go to other committees, but this does happen in some cases. The report considered at Audit & Standards committee on 27 November is available on the council website. We will also circulate the link to this report to all Housing Committee members. A report updating Housing Committee on the Housing Repairs & Maintenance service, including an update on the Internal Audit will be presented to our next Housing Committee in January.

In terms of response to your specific questions:

1. Any additional resources needed for the service over and above the current budget for 2020/21 will be included within the HRA budget report going to January's Housing Committee.
2. A follow-up audit will be included in the 2021/22 Internal Audit Plan. This audit will follow-up on the findings and the agreed actions reported in the audit report dated October 2020. It will also consider any changes in the service and emerging risks in the intervening period. Following the audit a revised audit opinion will be given which will be one of the four opinions agreed with the Audit & Standards and Committee. These are "Substantial", "Reasonable", "Partial" and "Minimal" Assurance. Until the completion of this piece of work it is not practical for the Internal Audit Service to provide a revised audit opinion. In the meantime, I would just like to point out that if your colleagues on Audit & Standards had had any concerns about this, they did have the option of requesting housing management officers attend a future meeting of Audit & Standards.
3. We have continued to directly engage contractors where required over the course of this year. We will be commencing further work for our contractor supply chain for Repairs & Maintenance early in 2021 ahead of the current arrangements ending in 2022.
4. and 5. We will provide these details to Housing Committee in the January update report.

### **(12) Councillor McNair: Mobile Phone Masts**

- 69.24 Through what mechanism, for example a supplementary planning document, could 5G mast developers with prior approval be required to provide suitable camouflaging of cabinets and base stations, and would you support the implementation of such a mechanism?

### **Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

69.25 Masts, cabinets and base stations are often ‘permitted development’ – this means they don’t require prior approval or a planning application. Where, the installation of a mobile phone mast still requires prior approval – the decision needs to be made within 56 days and only ‘siting and appearance of the development’ can be considered as part of making the decision.

The council therefore has limited control this type of development. Given this, and the Government’s published intention to extend permitted development to allow 5G Masts and equipment without even prior approval, the request to prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance can’t be supported. It couldn’t be used by officers and it wouldn’t be a good use of officer time.

**(13) Councillor Theobald - Patcham Roundabout:**

69.26 The Patcham roundabout (London Road) is the gateway to the City for many visitors and residents of the City. The roundabout is in a very poor condition and has been for many years now. It is not a good advert for our City and disappointing for residents who want to see our city kept well presented.

Patcham Councillors were promised that work would start this year on landscaping the roundabout to improve the visual amenity of this entry point to the City.

This hasn’t happened to date.

Please provide an update on the status of this work.

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

69.27 Work is in progress to reach an agreement between Highways England, the council and a contractor for these works to go ahead. The roundabout is owned by Highways England and therefore a 3-way contractual arrangement is required which is agreed by all parties. Negotiations and due diligence are progressing and we hope this will be finalised shortly so that works can start in the New Year.

69.28 The Mayor then called an adjournment for a refreshment break from 6.30pm to 7.00pm.

**70 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

70.1 The Mayor noted that 16 oral questions had received and that 30 minutes were set aside for the duration of the item. The Mayor then called on Councillor Platts to put her question to Councillor Heley.

70.2 Councillor Platts asked the following question; The Labour Group worked over several months with the Executive Leadership Team to design a new senior management structure that would have covered all the bases and saved over £116k from the council’s budget. We are disappointed to see these plans dropped without consultation and new posts advertised of salaries of over £100k. We find this particularly inappropriate given the number of people losing their jobs, businesses and livelihoods in our city right now.

Will the Leader of the council explain why they have dropped the Labour Group's plans to save over £100k from the salaries budget?

- 70.3 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied; Obviously we don't always agree on political matters but there has always be a broad understanding and clarity that ensuring that the senior management team is fit for purpose is important. We are looking at the restructure still and to be clear we are looking at savings as well. I do have to say that the city needs leadership on some of the big issues and these are significant leadership roles, managing large numbers of staff right through to ensuring effective management of multi-million-pound projects. For example, with the Executive Director for Children, which obviously has a significant legal responsibility as well. I think it is fair to say as well, that the situation that we were handed in the summer, if we are going to talk about saving money, there were temporary directors so they were hired through recruitment agencies and were being paid £900, a day and that is going to be compared to putting these people in place permanently and that will be on a day rate for example for an Executive Director of £803. So, by day 100 of the new contract for the new Executive Directors we will have saved the taxpayers money.
- 70.4 Councillor Platts asked the following supplementary question; In whatever plan the Administration comes up with will they stand by their commitment to close the gap amongst black minority and ethnic workers and ensure that all members of the Executive Leadership Team receive equal pay?
- 70.5 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied, I do know and I am happy to provide you with the specifics on these as well but the percentage of BME applicants has increased over the last few years and it has been increasing at a steady slow pace over the last 5 years and we are hoping that with the continued work, for example in January we are going to be doing an internal audit on recruitment and that is going to be a key part of the way we look at our recruitment. It is a really important issue I am happy to get you these specifics on that in writing as well.
- 70.6 Councillor Bell asked the following question; I am assuming that the Leader of the Council supports the city tourism sector as he sits on the TECC committee?
- 70.7 Councillor Ebel replied; Yes.
- 70.8 Councillor Bell asked the following supplementary question; Considering income from tourism for the city of circa £900m a year, which is more than the council's annual budget, and accounts for 14% of the city's employment in the city and the city being rated only 70<sup>th</sup> out of 105 seaside towns, would you then now inform the chamber tonight what projects you have and what actions you are taking as a Green Administration, what will you be proposing which will support tourism in the city? I would also ask this council and the Administration to request that these council Members do not speak against the tourism in the city in the media.
- 70.9 Councillor Ebel replied; We do quite a lot on tourism. Since 1 April
- Offered complimentary annual VisitBrighton partnership to 525+ tourism businesses, ensuring their businesses continue to be promoted throughout the pandemic,

- Sent 117 newsletters to citywide tourism stakeholders giving timely updates on COVID, messaging, legislation, guidance, grant funding etc and latterly BREXIT related guidance, which have an average open rate of 32.97%,
- Established a 'Business Support Hub', supporting tourism businesses in the City through COVID [Business Support Hub - Visit Brighton](#) ,
- Promoted, maintained and updated visitbrighton.com with positive Brighton & Hove messaging, advising visitors of current COVID guidance and detailing 'Good to Go' accreditation for businesses whilst offering inspiration for trips in the future, attracting 950,000-page views,
- Communicated with 61,012 followers on Twitter, 28,968 on Facebook and 24,796 on Instagram, promoting both the on and offline offers of local tourism businesses,
- Promoted the #nevernormalbrighton tourism recovery campaign; Brighton doesn't do 'normal', has never done 'normal' and never will! Designed to give residents, day visitors and regional staying visitors the confidence to return to the City, it has been promoted via citywide poster advertising, regional local papers, digital advertising at local stations, sponsored advertising on social media channels and via The Metro,
- Secured £1.3m worth of positive destination coverage in regional and national titles including: The Sunday Times, Daily Telegraph, Discover Britain, and Olive Magazine,
- Worked with conference clients throughout the lockdown period to re-schedule events cancelled throughout 2020, ensuring that they return to Brighton & Hove in 2021 and beyond,
- Worked collaboratively with pan-Sussex organisations, Tourism South East, Tourism Alliance, VisitEngland, VisitBritain and the Cabinet Office, ensuring that the needs of the Brighton & Hove visitor economy is represented.

Besides that we have also been working on a culture recovery fund because we believe that what is important is that people come to our city because of the culture and entertainment our events offer so while we are working on that we are supporting our local creative industry and businesses because it is really difficult at the moment and we want them to survive so that in the future visitors are still attracted to our city. If you have any follow up questions, I am happy to do that by email.

70.10 Councillor Appich asked the following question; During the lockdowns we have seen a significant increase in the public use of parks as well as cycling and walking across our city fortunately this has continued after the 2<sup>nd</sup> lockdown and we are seeing unprecedented numbers of residents and visitors visiting the seafront and our parks. What we don't have is access to toilet facilities in seafront pubs and restaurants . This combines with significant pressures to our now existing facilities so there are now huge queues when the weather is nice at the Hove Seafront toilets. This has had a significant impact on some of our older and disabled residents who have contacted us in the Labour Group and expressed their concerns. You will all agree that it is excluding a large number of people from going outside which is the net impact of not having enough facilities due to the lack of these toilets it is grossly unfair that this is discriminatory to a whole group of our citizens. What are the plans for introduction of more publicly accessible toilets, including specialist disability facilities?

70.11 Councillor Heley replied; I am happy to speak to you about this in more detail but Healthmatic, as you probably know, are contracted to clean and maintain toilets across



the city on behalf of the council and Cityclean manage them. I believe in 2018 there was a decision to start charging for toilets for the purpose of renovating our current ones to make sure they are ok and assessing needs of other parts of the city. So on this specific point I will get back to you and accessible toilets that is something that I really care about and am happy to chat more about the details.

- 70.12 Councillor Appich asked the following supplementary question; Many of our toilets are fundamental to the health and wellbeing of our community as we have already discussed. You will agree that we do not want to lose any of these scarce facilities. Will you agree to a nomination of these toilets as assets of community value?
- 70.13 Councillor Heley replied; That sounds like an interesting idea, I will definitely look into it.
- 70.14 Councillor Nemeth asked the following question; We appreciated the upright answers that were given by the Leader of the Council at the last meeting of Full Council and were particularly impressed by the Leader in ensuring that all questions were answered when he could easily have hidden away after the 30 minute cut off, so thank you for that.

In response to my question I was told that a secret agreement existed between the Green and Labour Groups and that it wouldn't be released, fair enough. It was sadly leaked anyway and of course confirms what we asserted which is that opposition councillors have agreed not to oppose. Given that opposition councillors are still taking opposition wages and it is in black and white that opposition functions are not being carried out would the Leader support the review by the relevant council body into the legality of this situation.

- 70.15 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied; As you well know Councillor Nemeth, the appointment to committees were agreed at Full Council and it was open to all members of a committee to scrutinise the policy which you, or any other member, could have done as a member of any of the committees. I think I am also rather dismayed, we are in the middle of a pandemic and instead of keeping the focus on doing the best for our city your questions are repeatedly on the same matter, you asked virtually the same question 2 months ago. The city needs action it doesn't need this sort of spat.
- 70.16 Councillor Nemeth asked the following supplementary question; Regardless of the technicalities, just mentioned, does the Leader of the Council agree that such a situation, which includes secret pre-meets, pre-agreed policy positions does not fully tally with the Green Party's manifesto aspiration to make Brighton & Hove the most democratic city in the country?
- 70.17 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied, When we are talking about democracy I'm afraid I won't be taking lectures from a party that have seen fit to break national law and obligations over Brexit and indeed councillors failing to comply with the council's own Code of Conduct for Members. So I'm sorry but I am not going to be taking lectures on this. The appropriate process came through the relevant council bodies. Even some of the joint working that is notionally secret has been agreed on places like Housing Committee. Not only was it made public, but it was actually voted on at committee as well. Also, this isn't a secret deal, we published, and I believe the Labour Group as well published, soon after the local elections In June last year I believe. We both published statements saying

that we were intending to work together because we wanted to put the best interests of our city first.

70.18 Councillor Janio asked the following question; Just to correct Councillor Mac Cafferty on the last point, the Government didn't in fact break the law because they didn't put forward those amendments.

As part of the post Brexit overhaul of procurement practises the recently published Green Paper transforming public procurement means that councils may soon be allowed to limit bids for some contracts to local businesses and social enterprises, thus boosting local economy. This greater local control, it is hoped, will also help the UK meet its' net zero carbon target of 2050. Will the Leader of the Council agree with me that with the UK finally and fully leaving the European Union on 1 January and thus no longer being forced to follow the shockingly unethical procedures currently laid down by the European Union, the Green Paper will provide Brighton & Hove City Council with a historic opportunity to overhaul its procurement regime?

70.19 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied; I think what we have been seeing around the country over recent years is that actually a whole series of councils have been looking at the entire way in which they procure products. They have been breaking down contracts into smaller streams and so on and I think that is the route to go down so that you can actually begin to allow local companies a say in what has happened as to procurement.

I am not too clear what Cllr Janio is trying to say other than I assume he supports Brexit, but I think that we have a number of the powers already. I am not too clear on how praiseworthy his proposal is.

70.20 Councillor Janio asked the following supplementary question; Would the Leader of the Council commit to not only an extension of previously successful 'Buy Local' initiatives but now also, from 1<sup>st</sup> January, focus a campaign on 'Buy Local, Buy British'.

70.21 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied; We have already supported several times the 'Buy Local' campaign, and I know that when the Conservative administration was last around that they had 'Buy Local' campaigns and believed to be fair administrations since have been supportive of local businesses. I think critically recovery from the pandemic is going to have to be a realisation that we all have to support local businesses.

Brighton & Hove is in Britain and if he what he is looking for is determination by that answer that we buy British products as B&H is in Britain, then yes, we will be buying British products.

70.22 Councillor Fishleigh asked the following question; Lockdown confirmed how vital our city's parks, playgrounds and other public green spaces are for our physical and mental well-being. How well these assets are maintained is a reflection of our city's values and priorities. Cityparks receives a fraction of the council's annual budget and is a genuinely low-cost service that can be enjoyed by residents regardless of their income or where they live.

Please, would the council look at every way possible to increase Cityparks' budget in 2021/22, so that additional people can be recruited for enforcement, graffiti

removal, organising volunteer teams and, perhaps most importantly, ensuring that all external funding sources are continually investigated.

70.23 Councillor Heley replied; I agree that Lockdown has shown how important our parks and green spaces are. I recognise the need to make the most of volunteers and external funding opportunities in our parks and open spaces and have taken measures to improve Cityparks ability to secure funding, facilitate volunteering and spend funding which we already have.

In the new year 1 full time and 1 part time post holder will start in the tree section to facilitate and secure funding for the tree planting we want to see in the City. In addition, two new posts funded from the capital we have generated from external sources to spend some of the money we have already secured this will free up other team members to look for additional funding from elsewhere. Environmental Enforcement Officers do patrol parks and open spaces to deter environmental crimes. Cityclean operatives remove graffiti from the council's property within parks.

70.24 Councillor Fishleigh asked the following supplementary question, All councillors received an email from a respected member of the City Parks team outlining the need for these posts and I don't think you've answered my question so I will leave it at that.

70.25 Councillor Wilkinson asked the following question; Fly tipping is a major concern to many of the residents in my ward as well as being an issue that affects all parts of the city and is on the increase, especially since the pandemic. There are not many areas where examples cannot be seen and its negative impact on the wellbeing of residents can be seen with it being a source of pollution and a danger to public health. Dealing with this has a significant cost to the council, what plans do the Administration have to improve enforcement against fly tipping and in particular curb-side fly tipping?

70.26 Councillor Heley replied; In October, we launched a clampdown on fly-tippers by installing CCTV and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras. Over 70 fixed penalty notices have been issued to date and I am happy to discuss the strategy for curb-side fly tipping.

70.27 Councillor Wilkinson asked the following supplementary question; does the Administration have any plans to develop a robust and effective strategy to deal with the increasing amounts of fly tipping across the city and if not will it consider doing so with a comprehensive review into the situation so as to develop a suitable strategy to address the problem?

70.28 Councillor Heley replied; We are developing a waste strategy and I am happy to discuss this with Councillor Wilkinson outside of this meeting and at committee.

70.29 Councillor Mears asked the following question; The Council's anti-racist policy states to be a non-racist is not sufficient, institutions have to commit to anti-racist action, inaction would be to condone the status-quo. Given the policy, is it acceptable that the Leader of the Opposition has refused to provide answers to the local Argus newspaper over her role in an office which has been found to unlawfully interfered in anti-Semitism complaints?

- 70.30 Councillor Childs raised a point of order as the question was not directed to the Leader but rather to the Leader of the Labour Group and was not relevant to the Council business.
- 70.31 The Monitoring Officer stated that as the question related to another Member of another party rather than the Administration, it was within the discretion of the Leader to decide whether to answer or not.
- 70.32 Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that he felt it was inappropriate to answer on behalf of another Member, but he believed that all councillors wanted to fight racism and that Councillor Platts was amongst that number.
- 70.33 Councillor Williams asked the following question; given the current situation it is unlikely that local restaurants will be opening on Christmas Day to feed the homeless as has been the tradition in the past. What plans are being put in place to make sure our rough sleepers and homeless are cared for adequately this Christmas?
- 70.34 Councillor Gibson replied; There will be a Christmas SWEP opening from the 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> December providing food and resources. The council with partners has pursued a policy to provide accommodation and there are a small number of people who have not taken up offers. All of those will be invited to come into SWEP and they will be encouraged to take up a long-term solution for accommodation.
- 70.35 Councillor Williams asked the following supplementary question; I am specifically concerned about the Christmas period and ask if it will be clearly publicised and information given to everyone so that they are aware of what is available.
- 70.36 Councillor Gibson replied; yes, there is the Street Link number and the provision available will be made known. There is a need to tackle the root cause and the aim will be to provide accommodation throughout the city to enable those rough sleepers to move off the streets. He wished to congratulate the officers involved to date and hoped that continued improvement could be achieved. He noted that the long-term structural change to have available accommodation was the important goal.
- 70.37 The Mayor noted that the 30 minutes set aside for oral questions had been reached and stated that he was therefore minded to call an end to the item.
- 70.38 Councillor Nemeth proposed that a further 10-minute extension be agreed, which was seconded by Councillor Simson.
- 70.39 The Mayor noted that an extension had been proposed and put this to the vote and called on the Leaders of each Group to confirm their position, along with the Groups and the Independent Members as follows:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that Green Group were voting against an extension of time and this was confirmed by the Green Group;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were voting against an extension of time and this was confirmed by the Labour Group;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative Group were voting for an extension of time and this was confirmed by the Conservative Group;

Councillor Brennan stated that she was voting against an extension of time;

Councillor Fishleigh stated that she was voting for an extension of time,

Councillor Janio stated that he was voting for an extension of time,

Councillor Knight stated that she was voting against an extension of time.

70.40 The Mayor confirmed that the proposal to extend the time for oral questions had been lost. He noted that the remaining questions would be carried over to the next meeting subject to the confirmation of those Members.

70.41 The Mayor was also mindful of the current raised level of feelings amongst Members and stated that he was adjoining the meeting for a short period to allow the atmosphere to cool and would reconvene the meeting at 7.55pm. He then adjourned the meeting at 7.47pm.

## **71 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY – CONSULTATION RESPONSE REPORT 2020**

71.1 **RESOLVED:** That the revised Statement of Licensing Policy as detailed in appendix A and revised by the Licensing Committee be adopted and that officers be granted delegated authority to make any minor, formatting and numbering corrections that may be required.

## **72 AN UPDATE ON THE ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR BRIGHTON & HOVE**

72.1 The Mayor noted that Councillor Fishleigh had wanted to seek some clarification in relation to the strategy but that this would now be sought outside of the meeting and therefore it was not necessary for it to be taken

72.2 **RESOLVED:** That the Economic Strategy be amended to remove the Productivity Commission as a priority action and that it be noted the objectives of the Commission will be pursued in other ways, as set out in Priority Action PA4 in Appendix 1 to the report.

## **73 COVID-19 RECOVERY & RENEWAL PROGRAMME UPDATE**

73.1 Councillor Platts stated that the report had been referred to the Council as she had been disappointed to find that the Recovery Sub-Committee meeting scheduled for November had been cancelled. She had hoped to be able to discuss the recovery process in relation to the pandemic given the number of people facing difficulties in city and the need for a sustainable solution. She hoped that all councillors would be consulted and involved in the recovery programme.

73.2 Councillor Bagaeen stated that he fully agreed and felt that detail was currently missing, and businesses needed clarity and help if the local economy was to recovery. He hoped that further information would be forthcoming.

73.3 Councillor Shanks stated that it was a difficult situation being faced by everyone and officers were working hard to ensure that action could be taken, and information provided. There was a need to support them at this time and she was certain that more information would be brought to both the Recovery Sub-Committee and Policy & Resources Committee.

73.4 The Mayor stated that the report had been referred for information and therefore moved that it be noted.

73.5 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

#### **74 BREXIT RESILIENCE & PLANNING**

74.1 Councillor Clare noted that the report had been discussed extensively at P&R but that it was felt that it should be brought to Council for all Members' attention.

74.2 Councillor Yates referred to pages 229 onwards and stated that the nature and scope of the challenge facing the council and the city was clearly outlined. There was on-going uncertainty and he noted that currently the council had identified 34 amber risks which had to be a concern for all Members.

74.3 Councillor Ebel noted that the transition period was due to come to an end and there would then still be a real challenge for everyone to face and a need to support everyone where possible. The Brexit Working Group was meeting regularly to oversee preparations and the tremendous level of work required in getting communications out. She wished to thank all the officers involved in the work and especially Dee Humphries.

74.4 The Mayor stated that the report had been referred for information and therefore moved that it be noted.

74.5 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

#### **75 NO CUTS TO UNIVERSAL CREDIT - LET FAMILIES KEEP THE £20 INCREASE**

75.1 The Notice of Motion as listed on the agenda was proposed by Councillor Brennan as an Independent Member and formally seconded by Councillor Knight who reserved her right to speak later in the debate.

75.2 Councillors Fishleigh, Gibson, Evans, Nemeth and Knight spoke on the motion and Councillor Brennan thanked those for their supportive comments.

75.3 The Mayor then put the motion as listed to the vote:

This Council resolves to:

- Request the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor and the Prime Minister, imploring the Government to take necessary steps to ensure that the £20 increase

to Universal Credit is made permanent and extended to claimants on legacy benefits; and

- To request that the Chief Executive and officers work with other local government organisations, such as the LGA to form a coalition to pressure the government to make the £20 increase to Universal Credit permanent.

75.4 The Mayor called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn and each of the Independent Members:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in favour of the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Green Group;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Labour Group;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative Group wished to abstain from voting on the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Conservative Group;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting for of the motion;

Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she wished to abstain from voting on the motion;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against the motion;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting for the motion.

75.5 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried.

## **76 ACTION TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF FIREWORKS**

76.1 The Notice of Motion as listed on the agenda was proposed by Councillor Brennan as an Independent Member and formally seconded by Councillor Knight who reserved her right to speak later in the debate.

76.2 Councillors Fishleigh, Gibson, Evans, Nemeth and Knight spoke on the motion and Councillor Brennan thanked those for their supportive comments.

76.3 The Mayor then put the motion as listed to the vote:

This Council resolves to:

- Request the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor and the Prime Minister, imploring the Government to take necessary steps to ensure that the £20 increase to Universal Credit is made permanent and extended to claimants on legacy benefits; and
- To request that the Chief Executive and officers work with other local government organisations, such as the LGA to form a coalition to pressure the government to make the £20 increase to Universal Credit permanent.

- 76.4 The Mayor called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn and each of the Independent Members:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in favour of the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Green Group;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Labour Group;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative Group wished to abstain from voting on the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Conservative Group;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting for of the motion;

Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she wished to abstain from voting on the motion;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against the motion;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting for the motion.

- 76.5 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried.

## **77 SUPPORT UNITED NATIONS TPNW: ICAN CITIES APPEAL**

- 77.1 The Notice of Motion as listed on the agenda was proposed by Councillor Evans on behalf of the Labour Group and formally seconded by Councillor Childs.

- 77.2 Councillor Clare moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Hugh-Jones.

- 77.3 Councillors Shanks, Nemeth and Janio spoke on the motion and Councillor Evans thanked everyone for their comments and confirmed that she could not accept the amendment.

- 77.4 The Mayor noted that the amendment had not been accepted and therefore put the amendment from the Green Group to the vote and called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn followed by the Independent Members:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were voting in favour of the amendment and this was confirmed by the Green Group Members;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were voting against the amendment and this was confirmed by the Labour Group Members;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative wished to abstain from voting on the amendment and this was confirmed by the Conservative Group Members;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting against the amendment;



Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she wished to abstain from voting on the amendment;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against the amendment;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting in favour of the amendment.

77.5 The Mayor confirmed that the outcome of the vote was tied and therefore he chose to use his casting vote against the amendment. He confirmed that the amendment had been lost and therefore put the motion as listed to the vote:

This Council notes;

- 1) That any nuclear weapon detonation by accident or intent would constitute a major humanitarian catastrophe, with consequences transcending national borders and having grave implications for the health and survival of current and future generations;
- 2) That the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons negotiated under United Nations auspices and adopted by 122 UN Member States on 7 July 2017, will gain international legal force on January 22nd 2021, 90 days after being signed and ratified by the first fifty governments;
- 3) The important security, peace-building, safety and educational roles and responsibilities of local authorities worldwide, including through 'Nuclear Free Local Authorities' (NFLA) and 'Mayors for Peace', of which BHCC is a member;
- 4) That Mayors for Peace works with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN, 2017 Nobel Peace laureate) and other partners in over a hundred countries to encourage cities to support the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;

This Council resolves;

- 1) To declare its support for the obligations and full implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
- 2) To call on the UK government to work for global peace in a world free of nuclear weapons by signing and ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and working alongside other UN Member States for its full implementation;
- 3) To inform the Prime Minister, UN Secretary-General, Mayors for Peace and International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons of the Council's adoption of this resolution.

77.6 The Mayor called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn and each of the Independent Members:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in favour of the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Green Group;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Labour Group;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative Group wished to abstain from voting on the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Conservative Group;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting for the motion;

Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she wished to abstain from voting on the motion;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against the motion;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting for the motion.

77.7 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried.

### **Closure Motion**

77.8 The Mayor noted the meeting had been in session for 4 hours and in accordance with council procedural rules, he was required to move a closure motion. He therefore moved that the meeting should be concluded and put the motion to the vote.

77.9 The Mayor called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn and each of the Independent Members:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in against the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Green Group;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Labour Group;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative Group were against the motion and this was confirmed by the Members of the Conservative Group;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting for the motion;

Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she was voting against the motion;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against the motion;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she wished to abstain from voting on the motion.

77.10 The Mayor noted that the motion had been lost and therefore moved to the next item.

## **78 POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER**

78.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Clare on behalf of the Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Heley.

78.2 Councillor Allcock moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Williams.

- 78.3 Councillors Brown welcomed the motion and the amendment but because of the reference to reducing the age of voting to 16 asked that the Conservative Group's opposition to such a change be recorded in the minutes.
- 78.4 Councillors Janio, Fishleigh and McNair also spoke on the motion and the amendment. Councillor Clare thanked everyone for their comments and confirmed that she was happy to accept the amendment. She hoped that the CYPs Committee would approve signing up to the Charter and improvements in communication and engagement with young people could be made so that they felt listened to.
- 78.5 The Mayor noted that the amendment had been accepted and that the Council was happy to move to a vote on the motion as amended, and therefore put the revised motion to the vote:

That this council:

- agrees the importance of including young people's voices in decision-making and commends the recent work on a 'youth engagement' action plan, which was created with young people themselves who worked hard on this initiative to ensure young voices have greater influence
- commends the work of young people at the forefront of the Black Lives Matter movement, the Youth Climate Strikes, and in organising the Youth Climate Assembly
- thanks Brighton and Hove Youth Council, YouthWise and Children in Care Council for their work in formally representing young people within council structures and recognises their importance
- reaffirms its prior commitment to votes at 16

This council therefore:

- agrees, subject to Children, Young People & Skills Committee approval, to sign up to the 'Power of Youth Charter', using the youth engagement report as a basis for showing how we will meet its aims;
  - requests the Children, Young People & Skills Committee receive a yearly report on actions taken against the Charter across the council;
  - commits to using our communication channels as councillors and political parties to support the work of young people, as per the charter
  - calls for a report to Children, Young People & Skills Committee, no later than April 2021, that:
    - assesses the methods the Council uses to engage with young people;
    - seeks to improve our communication with young people through a collaborative process; and
    - explores how young people are consulted and their views considered in all local policy decisions that impact them.
- 78.6 The Mayor then called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn followed by each of the Independent Members:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in favour of the motion as amended and this was confirmed by the Green Group Members;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the motion as amended and this was confirmed by the Labour Group Members;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative were in favour of the motion as amended and this was confirmed by the Conservative Group Members;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting for the motion as amended;

Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she wished to abstain from voting on the motion;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against the motion as amended;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting for the motion.

78.7 The Mayor confirmed that the motion as amended had been carried.

## **79 PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE FUNDING**

79.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Shanks on behalf of the Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Nield.

79.2 The Mayor stated that he had been informed of a problem with the webcast which had not been working and had prevented the press and members of the public from being to watch the meeting. He was uncertain as to when the problem had arisen and stated that he would adjourn the meeting for a short period to ascertain if the problem could be resolved.

79.3 The meeting was adjourned from 9.53pm to 10.00pm.

79.4 The Mayor reconvened the meeting and stated that the problem could not be rectified and as such he was advised that the outstanding items should be deferred to the next meeting in January. He therefore sought Council's agreement to adjourn the meeting and carry over the items to January.

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in voting in favour of adjourning the meeting and this was confirmed by the Members of the Green Group;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were voting in favour of adjourning the meeting and this was confirmed by the Members of the Labour Group;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative Group were voting in favour of adjourning the meeting and this was confirmed by the Members of the Conservative Group;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting in favour of adjourning the meeting;

Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she was voting against adjourning the meeting;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he was voting against adjourning the meeting;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting in favour of adjourning the meeting.

79.5 The Mayor confirmed that the proposal to adjourn the meeting had been carried and therefore the outstanding items would be carried over to the next meeting.

79.6 The Mayor thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 10.07pm.

**80 REGISTER OF HERITAGE ASSETS**

80.1 The item was deferred to the next meeting.

**81 FIELD OFFICERS**

81.1 The item was deferred to the next meeting.

**82 COMMITMENT TO HELPING THOSE WITH HIDDEN DISABILITIES**

82.1 The item was deferred to the next meeting.

**83 CLOSE OF MEETING**

83.1 The meeting closed at 10.07pm.

The meeting concluded at 10.07pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2021



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>No Confidence in Brighton and Hove Council - Petition for Debate</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>28 January 2021</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance &amp; Law</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	Mark Wall	Tel: 01273 291006
	<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk">mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 Under the Council's Petition Scheme if a petition contains more than 1,250 signatures and is not petition requesting officer evidence, it will be debated by the Full Council.
- 1.2 The e-petition has resulted in triggering a debate at the council meeting, having exceeded the threshold with a total of 4,412 signatures confirmed at the time of printing the report.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the petition is noted.

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION / CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:****3.1 The Petition:  
No Confidence in Brighton & Hove Council**

The greens are going to destroy this town more and more and they do not care. We as residents and people who come to the town need to put a stop to the madness happening here!

I hope together we can show them what we think of their stupid ideas for our once great town.

They pretend to care about the environment and yet Brighton is becoming a dive and now with all the new road layouts are causing a lot more pollution, not bad for the green party.

They need to remember they are meant to represent the people but that definitely is not the case, not for me and many others that I know anyway.

What they are doing will inevitably destroy local businesses and the town in general. We cannot let this happen.

We have to fight this all the way.

We need to try and get them to remove the old Shoreham road and the seafront cycle lanes.

I say we get as many people as we can to sign this petition and then show the council just how many people actually do not have any trust or confidence in them. I know they would not care but at least we can show them.

This is something I feel needs to be done because I worry about all the people that work in and around the town and disabled people who this will also effect greatly.

There are so many things this council have and will get wrong and it will be us that suffer.

Lead Petitioner – Katie Brotherton

Additional Information:

#### **4. PROCEDURE:**

- 4.1 The petition will be debated at the Council meeting in accordance with the agreed protocol:
  - (i) The Lead petitioner will be invited by the Mayor to present the petition and will have up to 3 minutes in which to outline the prayer of the petition and confirm the number of signatures;
  - (ii) The Mayor will then open the matter up for debate by councillors for period of 15 minutes and will first call on the relevant Committee Chair to respond to the petition and move a proposed response. The Mayor will then call on those councillors who have indicated a desire to speak in the matter, before calling on the relevant Committee Chair to respond to the debate;
  - (iii) An amendment to the recommendation in paragraph 2.1 of the report or to add additional recommendations should be submitted by 10.00am on the day of the meeting; otherwise it will be subject to the Mayor's discretion as to being appropriate. Any such amendment will need to be formally moved and seconded at the meeting;
  - (iv) After the 15 minutes set aside for the debate, the Mayor will then formally put:
    - (a) Any amendments in the order in which they are moved, and
    - (b) The substantive recommendation(s) as amended (if amended).



**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer which will be included in an addendum that will be circulated at the meeting:

**(1) Councillor Yates – Parking in Coombe Road area:**

Since the introduction of the residents parking scheme in the coombe road area (zone U) parking pressures have eased considerably and residents are truly relieved. Could the Lead member please advise how residents can contribute to a review of the impact and have their proposed improvements to layout incorporated into this? These ideas include additional bays, enhanced access for motorcycles and the introduction of paid on street cycle storage facilities.

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee****(2) Councillor Platts – Educational Outcomes in East Brighton:**

Class Divide is a grassroots campaign fighting to draw attention to the deeply unjust educational attainment gap for young people from the communities of Whitehawk, Manor Farm and Bristol Estate in East Brighton. East Brighton is an area that is economically disadvantaged with a high level of child poverty. The campaign highlights the lower rates of attainment at GCSE's in a range of subjects including English and maths and the higher rate of exclusions and referrals to special schools. This has a negative effect on children's life chances, embedding disadvantage through to adulthood and perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Will the Council commit to meeting the five demands of the campaign? In summary:

1. An annual report to the Children, Young People and Skills Committee on the school outcomes and attainment of children living Whitehawk, Bristol Estate and Manor Farm.
2. To publish a plan that specifically addresses what actions will be taken to reduce the identified educational inequalities experienced by children, young people and adults this area.
3. To make training on the experiences of working-class children in education compulsory for all school leaders and teachers in Brighton and Hove.
4. To take action to reduce the rate of school exclusions and the placement of children in alternative schools
5. To give local people a second chance by providing local learning and training opportunities and develop advocacy support for parents struggling to keep their children in school.

**Reply from Councillor Clare, Chair of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee****(3) Councillor Platts – Safety on Madeira Drive:**

Since the latest lockdown, Madeira Drive has once again become unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists, especially those with small children. The re-opening of Madeira Drive with one-way traffic has led to cars speeding between the Sea

Life Centre, Duke's Mound and Black Rock. Drivers have used this space to speed even when the five lanes on Marine Parade have been clear of traffic. On the weekend of 9th and 10th January, a combination of lockdown and sunny weather saw hundreds of people circulating in this area to get some fresh air and exercise after a week indoors. The volume of people was such that pedestrians were walking in the road to socially distance and were taken by surprise by vehicles. Some drivers were aggressive in trying to get through the crowds and the area was unsafe. Will the Council take urgent action to ensure there is sufficient space for people by either dedicating the area between the Sea Life Centre and Duke's Mound or Duke's Mound and Black Rock to pedestrians and cyclists whilst lockdown continues? From the Council's own figures produced in response to my previous written question, Black Rock car park is little used during the winter months.

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

**(4) Councillor Platts – Food Supplies in the City:**

Can the Council confirm the dates on which they have written to supermarket managers in our City asking them to take action to prevent panic buying since the start of the pandemic?

**Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

**(5) Councillor Platts – Food Supplies in the City (2):**

Can the Council confirm what action is being taken to ensure the City has a sustainable food supply now that we are experiencing the impact of Brexit in addition to the public health crisis?

**Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

**(6) Councillor Platts – Disadvantage:**

Trade union Usdaw has recently negotiated an increase in minimum pay for Morrison's workers and will become the first UK supermarket to pay at least £10 an hour from April. This is just over the current Brighton & Hove Living Wage of £9.50 per hour. Will the Council write to the Head Offices of other supermarkets with stores in Brighton & Hove urging them to do the same and help tackle disadvantage in our City?

**Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

**(7) Councillor Platts – Community Wealth Building:**

Will the Council commit to writing to all supermarket chains represented in the City to ask them how much local produce they stock; if they will increase their range and ensure such goods are prominently displayed and clearly labelled as being produced locally? This would support local producers to grow their businesses, create local jobs and contribute to a sustainable food supply as well as reducing food miles.

**Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

**(8) Councillor Allcock – Estate Development Budget:**

The Estate Development Budget (EDB) is a scheme that was set up to respond to suggestions from Council tenants and provides money for ideas that can make a positive difference to their neighbourhood.

The requirements are that EDB projects:

- Involve and be supported by as many neighbours as possible
- Should be completed in the same financial year
- Do not cost more than £10,000 for main bids and £1,000 for quick bids
- Are not be something that could be done as a repair or as part of a larger maintenance programme

What performance management processes does the Council have in place for the EDB scheme?

Since the scheme was established, how many and what percentage of EDB bids/project:

- Have been completed within the same financial year as the bid was agreed?
- Are not completed and still outstanding?
- Could reasonably be construed as being a repair or part of the Council's Housing estate planned maintenance programme?

What is the monetary value of these bids/projects?

**Reply from Councillor Gibson/Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

**(9) Councillor Grimshaw – Assisted Bin Collection Service:**

Can it be confirmed how many residents use the assisted bin collection service and what are the figures regarding complaints? Is there a dedicated officer to coordinate assisted collections and how do the teams ensure that recycling, garden refuse and general waste are all aware of the need for assisted collection?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

**(10) Councillor Williams – SWEP:**

There have been concerns raised by community groups that the council are operating what has been termed as 'Secret SWEP'. This is because arrangements for SWEP are not announced publicly thus difficult discover.

It is recognised that due to the pandemic, specific strategies to help rough sleepers have been put in place, and a lot of good work is being done. However, it is important concerned people, groups, and councillors are kept informed to enable people to actively help the homeless in bad weather. This is particularly important to make sure no one is left out.

The public wish to know what is the rational for SWEP method of operation at this time, is the everyone in policy being implemented compassionately and

sufficiently to include everyone in need and can we find a way to better inform when SWEP is triggered?

**Reply from Councillor Gibson/Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

**(11) Councillor Childs – Planning:**

I note with alarm the Government's new method for calculating house building targets which place the majority of the burden on the largest 20 English cities to fulfil national needs thus relieving Tory rural authorities of the need to build sufficient housing.

Will the Administration, take up with the Secretary of State, as a matter of urgency the new proposed housing targets that would require Brighton & Hove to increase its new housing target by over a third - placing more Green Field land at risk of development - and will they condemn the blatantly political method proposed by the Government that favours Conservative-led Councils?

**Reply from Councillor Littman, Chair of the Planning Committee**

**(12) Councillor Wilkinson:**

What measures are the Council taking to reduce vehicle speeds, improve pedestrian and cycle safety, improve air quality and encourage reduced car use in the Central Hove area?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

**(13) Councillor Mears – Contracts and Accountability (Spend Tables):**

The Council's website states that payments over £250 are to be published each month on the council website in 'spend tables':

"Each month we publish all the payments over £250 that we've made. They include payments to suppliers, grants to voluntary organisations and payments to individuals.

We reduced the threshold of publishing payments from £500 to £250, following changes introduced by the government."

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/council-and-democracy/council-finance/payments-over-%C2%A3250>

Despite this policy, the last spend table uploaded by the Council for scrutiny by the public was for June 2020.

At a time when so much Government funding is being provided and spent there is a need for accountability and transparency.

Can the Finance Chair advise why no spend tables have been uploaded since June 2020?

Can the Finance Chair please provide the spend tables for the missing months in the response?

**Reply from Councillor Druitt / Gibson, Joint Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee**

**(14) Councillor Mears – Housing Repairs**

The then Administration made a policy decision to insource the Housing Repairs Budget prior to last election.

Paperwork from the time estimated the cost of this policy decision would be nearly £10 million – to be incurred by the Housing Revenue Account.

What has been the additional cost of this policy to date beyond the original estimate, including costs associated with ongoing industrial action?

Bearing in mind that when this policy was presented prior to an election that very clear indications of the cost were provided, can the Chair confirm that the Housing Revenue Account, which is made up of tenants rent, will not be used to incur any ongoing additional costs going forward.

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

**(15) Councillor Barnett – Begging in the City**

In an article in *The Argus* on 14 November 2020, Brighton Housing Trust's Andy Winter said that begging was the elephant in the room that needed addressing by the council and that a great opportunity has been missed to address these problems.

Mr Winter works very hard in Brighton and Hove and is well respected. He says that unless we actively challenge begging we won't effectively address addictions, and without addressing addictions, we won't end rough sleeping.

I wholeheartedly agree and so would most of Brighton and Hove in my opinion. In my ward of Hangleton and Knoll I often speak to beggars to understand the situation they are in. Several have told me they live in accommodation provided by the council and receive food and benefits but continue to beg on the streets due to their addictions and because they feel nothing will be done to stop them.

We must take heed of Mr Winter's advice.

Please could you provide advice on the following?:

- a) The number of people the council estimates are currently begging in Brighton & Hove
- b) What efforts the council are making to end begging and aggressive begging on the streets of Brighton & Hove City Council
- c) Whether the Council would support a Cashless Donation Scheme such as that recently introduced in the Royal Borough. The Cashless Donation Scheme encourages residents to support a rough sleeper pathway as

opposed to giving spare change to beggars in order to provide more effective help to people.

- d) If so, whether the council would use its Communications programme to support a Cashless Donation Scheme in the City with the aim of providing better care and ending begging on the streets.

Supporting information:

<https://www.sloughexpress.co.uk/news/maidenhead/164657/council-to-launch-cashless-support-for-rough-sleepers.html>

Supporting information: <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/18871492.brighton-housing-trust-boss-prevention-key-ending-homelessness/>

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

**(16) Councillor Simson – Public Space Protection Orders**

Can the Chair of the TECC Committee please advise:

- a) Why has the Council not renewed PSPOs on the City's Parks?
- b) When and by whom was this decision taken and was there a vote?
- c) When did PSPOs for city parks expire?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

**(17) Councillor Theobald – Patcham Roundabout**

Thank you for your answer to my written question at the last council meeting.

In your answer you advised the following:

Work is in progress to reach an agreement between Highways England, the council and a contractor for these works to go ahead. The roundabout is owned by Highways England and therefore a 3-way contractual arrangement is required which is agreed by all parties. Negotiations and due diligence are progressing and we hope this will be finalised shortly so that works can start in the New Year.

Can you provide any update since the last meeting on the status of this project including whether negotiations and due diligence have now been finalised?

Is there a start date for works yet?

I have been asking these questions for at least the last five years and had a number of incorrect answers.

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

**ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

A period of not more than 30 minutes is set aside for oral questions from Members, at the expiry of which, the Mayor will call a halt and proceed to the next item of business of the agenda. Any Member whose question then remains outstanding will be contacted to determine whether they wish to have a written answer provided or for their question to be carried over to the next meeting.

The following Members have indicated that they wish to put questions to the Leader, Chairs of Committees or Members of the Council that have been appointed to an outside body. The Councillor asking the question may then ask one relevant supplementary question which shall be put and answered without discussion:

**(1) Councillor Platts**

Subject matter: **Drug Dealing in East Brighton**

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

**(2) Councillor Bell**

Subject matter: **Balanced Economics**

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

**(3) Councillor Childs**

Subject matter: **Planning**

Reply from Councillor Littman, Chair of the Planning Committee

**(4) Councillor Nemeth**

Subject matter: **Democracy in Brighton & Hove**

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

**(5) Councillor Fishleigh**

Subject matter: **Unnecessary Parking Fines in Stanmer Park**

Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

**(6) Councillor Fowler**

Subject matter: **Electric Charging Points**

Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

**(7) Councillor Bagaen**

Subject matter: **Anti-Racism Strategy**

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

**(8) Councillor Allcock**

Subject matter: **Schools Catering**

Reply from Councillor Clare, Chair of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee

- (9) Councillor McNair**  
Subject matter: **Trader Parking Permits**

Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

- (10) Councillor Wilkinson**  
Subject matter: **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods**

Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

- (11) Councillor Peltzer Dunn**  
Subject matter: **Geographical Neighbourhood Signage**

Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee

- (12) Councillor Barnett**  
Subject matter: **Estate Inspections**

Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee

- (13) Councillor Theobald**  
Subject matter: **Cycling in the City**

Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021/22</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>28 January 2021</b> 21 January 2021 - Policy & Resources Committee		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Acting Chief Finance Officer</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Paul Ross-Dale</b>	<b>Tel: 01273 291969</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Paul.ross-dale@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 Each financial year, national legislation requires the council to consider whether to revise or replace their local Council Tax Reduction (CTR) Scheme for working age people.
- 1.2 This year, Covid-19 has increased financial uncertainty for many residents in the city, and the council has endeavoured to ensure that people are supported, including implementation of the government's Covid-19 Hardship Fund which provided an additional discount of £150 for eligible claimants.
- 1.3 Council Tax Reduction helps thousands of households on a low income to pay their Council Tax and so, in reviewing the scheme, there are opportunities to improve the support available to claimants but this must obviously be balanced with the financial cost and affordability of any changes to the scheme.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Policy & Resources Committee recommends to Council that:

- 2.1 The maximum rate of Council Tax Reduction discount be increased from 80% of Band D to 82% of Band D.
- 2.2 The minimum award of Council Tax Reduction be reset to one of three options to be recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee:
  - 1) Option 1: reset the minimum award to 50p per week;
  - 2) Option 2: reset the minimum award to 20p per week;
  - 3) Option 3: reset the minimum award to 1p per week.
- 2.3 Funding of £0.200m be allocated for the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction fund.
- 2.4 The requirement for completing a Council Tax Reduction claim form be removed for Universal Credit recipients, in the circumstances described in paragraph 4.9 of the report.
- 2.5 It is noted that the council's appointed S151 Chief Financial Officer will, prior to 1 April 2021, exercise delegated powers to increase the appropriate calculative elements of the scheme to give effect to national changes.

- 2.6 It is noted that a more fundamental review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme will be undertaken and consulted on for 2022/23, including the alignment of the scheme with a wider review of the council's Welfare Support Framework.

### **3 CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 A localised system of Council Tax support was introduced in 2013, following the abolition of the national Council Tax Benefit system. The law requires that the scheme for pensioners retains the same eligibility and awards as the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme. However, a local authority may design its own Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme for working age households. To account for an immediate 10% reduction of government funding in 2013, the Council agreed a local CTR scheme which changed the rules for working age people, principally a change in the maximum discount from 100% to 91.5% of their Council Tax liability.
- 3.2 Subsequent years saw more changes, as government funding was further reduced (Appendix 2 outlines the changes over the years). Since April 2016, the maximum available discount has been 80% of Band D. Approximately 9 in every 10 CTR recipients (around 11,000) receive the maximum discount rate. This means that all working age recipients are asked to pay a minimum 20% of their household Council Tax, amounting to an average of £260.61 for a Band A property in the 2020/21 year.
- 3.3 Each year the Council is required to review the local CTR scheme and this review must be considered by full Council. A more fundamental review of the scheme had been planned for 2021/22 pursuant to a recommendation at the 5 December 2019 Policy & Resources Committee. However, Covid-19 has severely impacted on the ability of the Revenues & Benefits team to undertake a detailed review due to the very large number of Covid-19 business grants, discretionary funds, emergency assistance and hardship funds the team have had to administer as well as managing a substantial increase in CTR claimants and distribution of food and Local Discretionary Fund vouchers for people in hardship. Similarly, Covid-19 could also have impacted on the consultation time available.
- 3.4 To accommodate the impact of the pandemic, for 2021/22 the review has been scaled down to look at a small number of changes to existing parameters within the scheme, which can still have significant impact, and the review timetable has been put back to January Policy & Resources Committee and full Council, rather than December, to enable a 6 week consultation period to be undertaken. However, next year a full and fundamental review of the CTR Scheme will be undertaken for the 2022/23 financial year, including considering how the scheme aligns with and can complement the council's wider Welfare Support Framework.

### **4 PROPOSED CHANGES 2021/22**

- 4.1 Suggested changes to existing parameters of the scheme were put forward on the basis of providing a modest increase in the support available to working age claimants while taking into account the council's very challenging financial situation. The changes proposed were as follows:
- a) To increase the maximum discount from 80% to 82%;
  - b) To reduce the minimum award from £5.00 per week to 50p per week;
  - c) To apply CTR automatically (i.e. without the need to complete a claim CTR form) for most Universal Credit claimants who have indicated that they wish to claim a CTR discount; and

d) To maintain the Discretionary CTR fund at the higher level of £0.200m.

4.2 In considering any changes, it should be noted that the claimant count for CTR has increased by around 13% since the first Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020. As at the end of December 2020, there were 12,246 working age households in receipt of CTR, and 6,983 households of pensionable age. The rate of increase stabilised between August and October but has started to increase again since November. It is as yet unknown whether claim numbers will continue to increase as a consequence of the latest national lockdown .

Increasing the Maximum Discount

4.3 The proposed increase of the maximum discount from 80% to 82% is estimated to benefit a projected 12,000 households in 2021/22. Using an example calculation based on 2020/21 Council Tax bands, a household on maximum CTR in Band A would save £26.06, whilst a household in Band D would save £39.09 per year. The overall cost of this proposed change is estimated at £0.310m.

Resetting the Minimum Award

4.4 Like its predecessor, Council Tax Reduction is means-tested, measuring an applicant’s needs against their income and savings. The scheme is necessarily complex to allow for variations in household size and income, alongside other factors such as disability. Since 2017, the scheme has had a rule that a household must qualify for at least a £5.00 per week CTR discount before they are awarded the reduction.

4.5 It is possible to reset the minimum award to a lower level to bring more households into the scheme, albeit at a low level of award. The consultation asked about potentially reducing the minimum award from £5 per week to 50p per week as a principle, however, three options for resetting the minimum award are provided below. The options are based on minimums of 50p per week, 20p per week and 1p per week (i.e. effectively, no minimum). The options indicate the estimated additional households that would be brought into the scheme, the estimated additional cost of administration, and the potential advantages and disadvantages.

<b>Minimum Award Options</b>		
<b>Option 1:</b>	<b>Extra households entitled *</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Reduce Min. Award from £5 to <b>50p per week</b> (£26 per annum)	335	£43,000
<p><u>Potential advantages</u> Matches the pensioner CTR Scheme (and old Council Tax Benefit scheme). May still be a meaningful and supportive discount to many. Brings more people onto the benefit, which may entitle them to other general help or discounts **</p> <p><u>Potential disadvantages</u> £26 might still be a meaningful amount of discount for some very vulnerable households but it is worth noting that these cases would be for those whose income places them on the fringe of being entitled, so they are not as financially vulnerable as those who receive a greater or full CTR award.</p>		

<b>Option 2:</b>	<b>Extra households entitled *</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Reduce Min. Award from £5 to <b>20p per week</b> (£10 per annum)	355	£46,000
<p><u>Potential advantages</u>            £10 per annum may still be an amount that households could usefully use.            Brings more people onto the benefit, which may entitle them to other general help or discounts **</p> <p><u>Potential disadvantages</u>            Inequity with the (statutorily fixed) pensioner scheme.            May be on the borderline of whether it has any real value (i.e. 20p per week) to households and the administrative cost exceeds the value of the award.            Estimates suggest it would only bring an additional 40 households into benefit compared (i.e. in addition to option 1).            Possibility that even the people in receipt of the discount could be critical of the council issuing a 20p per week award.</p>		
<b>Option 3:</b>	<b>Extra households entitled *</b>	<b>Cost</b>
No minimum award (i.e. effectively sets it at <b>1p per week</b> (52p per annum)	370	£46,000
<p><u>Potential advantages</u>            Sends a clear statement that the council will pay anyone who is entitled to a discount, no matter how minimal.            Brings more people onto the benefit, which may entitle them to other general help or discounts **</p> <p><u>Potential disadvantages</u>            A financially meaningless discount of 1p per week (52p per annum) may draw criticism.            Possibility that even the people in receipt of the discount could be critical of issuing a 1p per week award.            Administrative cost far exceeds the award.            Inequity with (statutorily fixed) pensioner scheme.</p>		

\* *Estimated additional households that would be entitled based on current case information.*

\*\* *It is not possible to state precisely what entitlements this may bring, if any, but, for example, some services (e.g. some Vets) offer services free or at discounted prices if a person can show they are in receipt of benefits which may be valuable to many.*

#### Determining the level of the Discretionary CTR Fund

- 4.6 The council supplements the main CTR scheme with a Discretionary Council Tax Reduction (DCTR) fund. In 2020/21, £0.200m was allocated towards DCTR (increased from £0.150m in previous years). The scheme is used to “top up” CTR claims so that entitlement is increased to cover some or all of the remaining Council Tax liability not covered by CTR.
- 4.7 The current expenditure on DCTR is lower than expected, due to the government already providing additional Covid-19 financial hardship support for CTR recipients. The council received £2.330m additional funding earlier in the year, to

be distributed to existing Council Tax Reduction claims for 2020/21, up to a maximum value of £150 per household. £1.970m is already allocated to existing claims as at the end of November. There is an expectation in the government guidance that underspent funding will be allocated to those in need of assistance where possible. Policy & Resources Committee approved that any remaining resource from this fund is used to augment existing discretionary funds

- 4.8 The proposal for 2021/22 is to maintain the DCTR at £0.200m which will require allocation from one-off resources within the proposed 2021/22 General Fund revenue budget.

#### Removing the requirement for claim forms in certain circumstances

- 4.9 When a person makes a claim for Universal Credit with the DWP, they can indicate whether or not they wish to claim CTR as well. The DWP then notifies the Local Authority of the person's intention. CTR rules require that the Local Authority invites that person to complete a CTR claim form. However, for UC claimants, this process is a duplication, as they will already have given most of the necessary details to the DWP as part of their UC claim. Whilst the Local Authority does not have access to the UC claim system, we are able to award CTR on the basis that the DWP has already carried out the necessary checks and means-testing. Removing the need for a CTR claim form in this situation would mean less administration and more efficient processing of claims. The option is safe as the person would already have been subject to verification checks by the DWP.
- 4.10 There is an associated knock-on improvement in the smoothness of Council Tax collection, because until CTR is calculated, the household's Council Tax bill cannot be updated. The sooner a household's CTR is calculated, the sooner a bill can be issued for the remaining balance.
- 4.11 In a proportion of cases there would still be some information we would need to request from the claimant concerning their Non-Dependants. In these scenarios, a claim form would still be required.

#### Precepting Authorities and Calculative Elements

- 4.12 The council collects Council Tax on behalf of the East Sussex Fire Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex; any decisions the council makes relating to the CTR scheme affects the council tax base and in turn the resources these precepting authorities can generate
- 4.13 The calculative elements of the scheme are updated each year in line with national amounts under the delegated powers of the Executive Director of Finance & Resources currently exercised by the Acting Chief Finance Officer.

## **5 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 5.1 There are other mechanisms within the CTR scheme that could be altered to make it more or less supportive. For example, the extent to which a person's earnings and income affects their entitlement (known as 'the taper'). However, less than 10% of working age households have their CTR reduced as a result of the taper, so changing this element would not impact (benefit) as many people as the proposals outlined above.
- 5.2 Some Local Authorities have moved to an entirely new method of Council Tax support, where calculations are based on the band of income that a household falls into, rather than individual income assessments. However, this would be a significant undertaking requiring full analysis of the impact on our residents and

extensive consultation. As explained above, the capacity to consider and research a fundamental change of approach this year has been impacted by the pandemic and also introducing such uncertainty would be problematic in the context of national and local uncertainty.

- 5.3 Another alternative is to leave the scheme unchanged. There will be challenging budget decisions for the 2021/22 year and any funding allocated to increase CTR support to working age claimants could alternatively be put toward other priority services and provision or, if not allocated, would reduce pressure on the General Fund budget and reduce the need for savings elsewhere. However, a key priority for the council, as set out in its Corporate Plan, is to support vulnerable people and reduce inequality, and this is one of the most wide-reaching methods at the council's disposal.

## **6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 In line with legislative requirements, consultation has been undertaken with the Sussex Police and East Sussex Fire authorities. A public consultation began on 20 October 2020 and concluded on 1 December 2020 and participation was encouraged by sending an electronic mailshot to a cross-section of approximately 13,000 residents. The voluntary sector was consulted using an on-line video conference session on 17 November 2020. For those residents not digitally enabled, a phone line was promoted through the on-hold message of the Council Tax public service line to enable paper copies of the consultation to be posted out, on request. In addition, customers who phoned the advice lines for Together Co and Possability People during this period were informed about the open consultation and the option to submit a paper response.
- 6.2 The Sussex Police Authority has responded that it fully supports the proposal to increase maximum CTR to 82%, and to reduce the minimum £5 award requirement of CTR.
- 6.3 The East Sussex Fire Authority has responded that it recognises the impact of Covid-19 on local communities and the need to support those who are vulnerable, both financially and for other reasons. However, in common with other local authorities they are already facing significant financial challenges due both to reductions in government funding and the impact of Covid-19. They further stated: "Council Tax is our most important funding stream (70% in 2020/21). The Authority will need to take account of any further reduction in council taxbase on its income when considering options for achieving a balanced budget for 2021/22 and beyond."
- 6.4 There were 597 responses to the public consultation. All of the proposed measures attracted strong support.
- 6.5 Over 80% agreed with making the scheme more supportive in general (66.7% of whom strongly agreed). 71.7% agreed with increasing the maximum CTR rate, with around 20% thinking it should increase to 82% and 40% thinking it should be more than 82%. There was a lower percentage of respondents (56.5%) who agreed with resetting the minimum award to zero or £0.50p. There was support for increasing the Discretionary Payment fund, with 67.9% of respondents agreeing. Finally, the proposal to remove the requirement for a claim form in certain circumstances attracted support from around 70%.
- 6.6 Additional freeform comments are included in Appendix 1. Whilst this data is challenging to analyse statistically, it is possible to identify themes. For example,

where people had concerns about the proposals, it was often around the impact on Council Tax bills going up for all other residents and whether or not other council departments would have their funding reduced, thereby impacting on services. It has also been highlighted that there is a group of people for whom there is no CTR entitlement as their income is just over the entitlement threshold, and yet these people have been also been impacted by Covid-19, specifically those households whose income has been reduced by Furlough or have had their hours of work reduced.

- 6.7 The consultation did not give rise to a need for the proposals to be amended. However, members may wish to note the concerns raised about how the changes would be funded and whether there would be a detrimental impact on the very same services that vulnerable people rely on. These concerns were highlighted by a selection of respondents in all categories, whether they agreed, or were unsure about the proposals. In terms of the group of people who are struggling but not quite entitled to CTR, removing the £5 minimum award requirement will bring a modest amount of households into entitlement. There are also potential opportunities to assist these groups from other temporary government funds, such as the Winter Covid grant and Local Discretionary Social Fund. Officers will ensure that where feedback is relevant from the CTR consultation, it will be fed into discussions about how those discretionary funds are allocated.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 By changing the thresholds for two of the key Council Tax Reduction criteria, the council can assist up to around 12,000 working age households. If approved, this would provide both practical and symbolic support for some of the most vulnerable households in the city.

## **8 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 8.1 Changes in the number of claimants and the planned council tax increase in 2021/22 will affect the overall cost of the scheme regardless of other changes. The number of claimants has increased considerably due to the pandemic and it is particularly challenging to estimate to what extent this may level off next year as the city comes out of lockdown and as vaccination programmes are rolled out and begin to impact. The estimated cost of the proposed 2021/22 CTR scheme has been reflected in the Council Tax Base report elsewhere on the Policy & Resources Committee agenda.
- 8.2 The proposed changes to the scheme in this report are estimated to add up to £0.356m to the cost of the scheme. Provision of £1m had been put in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2021/22 toward supporting Corporate Plan priorities. This increase in the cost of the CTR cost would be a first call on this allocation and an estimate was included in the draft budget to Policy & Resources Committee on 3 December 2020. However, as with other commitments and service pressure funding, this ultimately adds to the projected budget gap in 2021/22, requiring savings to be found elsewhere to balance the budget as required by law.
- 8.3 It is also proposed to maintain the discretionary CTR fund at the level provided in 2020/21 of £0.200m. The existing recurrent budget is £0.010m and has been supplemented each year by one-off funding and therefore this will require additional one-off funding of £0.190m in the 2021/22 budget. This allocation is

included within the draft budget report elsewhere on this agenda and will be treated as a commitment in setting the 2021/22 budget if approved.

*Finance Officer Consulted: James Hengeveld*

*Date: 25/11/20*

Legal Implications:

- 8.4 Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires that the making or any revision to a Council Tax Reduction scheme be approved by the authority itself; such a determination is not capable of delegation to a Committee. Accordingly, approval for the revisions to the scheme must be obtained from full Council. Recommendations 2.1 to 2.3 above reflect this requirement.
- 8.5 The council is empowered by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 to pay up to 100% of an eligible individual's council tax, so the recommendation to increase the maximum rate of Council Tax Reduction from 80% of Band D, to 82% of Band D, is within the council's powers.

*Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley*

*Date: 23/11/2020*

Equalities Implications:

- 8.6 We do not anticipate any negative impacts on those with protected characteristics, as the measures will make CTR uniformly more supportive. For example, the CTR caseload shows that those with a disability are disproportionately likely to be recipients of CTR, along with women, who are more likely to be the head of a lone parent household. However, the new proposals mean that both groups would receive more support.
- 8.7 The EIAs for the Recovery and Renewal programme are linked and also help to provide insight for vulnerable groups in the CTR arena. The work being undertaken in the vulnerability, Welfare Support and Food project 'cells' all complements the aims of supporting the City's most vulnerable residents.
- 8.8 One category highlighted as a concern is not from a specific protected characteristic, but instead from a financially vulnerable cohort. Those households on the cusp of entitlement are seeing increased debt and financial pressure, and yet just miss out on CTR. By reducing the minimum award level, it is anticipated that around 370 more households will become eligible for CTR.

Sustainability Implications:

- 8.9 There are no specific sustainability implications.

Brexit Implications:

- 8.10 Some of the same risks around Brexit also impact in the welfare area. For example, if there are disruptions to the supply chain for food, medical supplies and other essential items, this could impact on availability of those items and also cost. The more vulnerable households in the city would be more adversely impacted in such circumstances. Whilst CTR cannot mitigate those risks, there is clearly some benefit in making the scheme more supportive.

Any Other Significant Implications:

None.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**



**Appendices:**

1. Summary of Consultation Responses
2. Details of previous scheme changes
3. Ward Breakdown of the CTR Scheme
4. Equality Impact Assessment

**Background Documents**

1. Consultation responses held by the Revenues & Benefits team.



## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

In line with legislative requirements, consultation has been undertaken to test proposals for changes to the Council Tax Reduction scheme from 1 April 2021.

The Sussex Police and East Sussex Fire authorities were consulted, alongside a public consultation that began on 20 October 2020 and concluded on 1 December 2020. Participation was encouraged by sending an electronic mailshot to a cross-section of approximately 13,000 residents. The voluntary sector was consulted using an on-line video conference session on 17 November 2020. For those residents not digitally enabled, a phone line was promoted through the on-hold message of the Council Tax public service line to enable paper copies of the consultation to be posted out, at request. In addition, customers who phoned the advice lines for Together Co and Possability People during this period were informed about the open consultation and the option to submit a paper response.

### Police and Fire Authority

The Sussex Police Authority has responded that it fully supports the proposal to increase maximum CTR to 82%, and to reduce the minimum £5 award requirement of CTR.

The East Sussex Fire Authority has responded that it recognises the impact of Covid-19 on local communities and the need to support those who are vulnerable, both financially and for other reasons. However, in common with other local authorities they are already facing significant financial challenges due both to reductions in government funding and the impact of Covid-19. They further stated: "Council Tax is our most important funding stream (70% in 2020/21). The Authority will need to take account of any further reduction in council taxbase on its income when considering options for achieving a balanced budget for 2021/22 and beyond."

### Public consultation

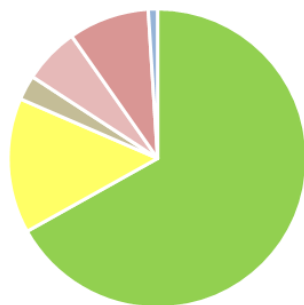
There were 597 responses to the public consultation. All of the proposed measures attracted strong support.

### Analysis of the key questions

**On the general topic of making the scheme more supportive, 81% either strongly agreed or tended to agree.**

<b>Q1a. Do you agree or disagree with making the CTR scheme more supportive to people on the lowest incomes, if funding allows?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	398	66.7
Tend to agree	87	14.6
Neither agree nor disagree	16	2.7
Tend to disagree	36	6.0
Strongly disagree	52	8.7
Don't know / not sure	6	1.0
Total	595	99.7
No response	2	.3
Total	597	100.0

Q1a. Do you agree or disagree with making the CTR scheme more supportive to people on the lowest incomes, if funding allows?

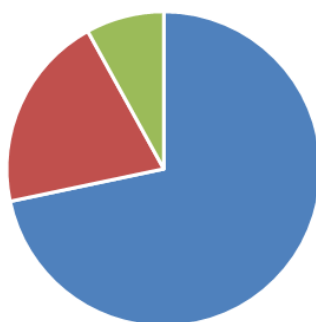


■ Strongly agree      ■ Tend to agree      ■ Neither agree nor disagree  
■ Tend to disagree      ■ Strongly disagree      ■ Don't know / not sure

When asked about increasing the maximum amount of CTR, again there was strong support, at nearly 72%. Among those who agreed with increasing the maximum, the most popular option was to increase it by more than 82%. This was almost twice as popular as the option of increasing it to 82%. When asked whether the amount should be increased further in future years, 64% were in favour.

Q2a. Do you agree with the idea of increasing the maximum amount of CTR?		Number of responses	Percent
Yes		428	71.7
No		121	20.3
No preference		48	8.0
Total		597	100.0

Q2a. Do you agree with the idea of increasing the maximum amount of CTR?

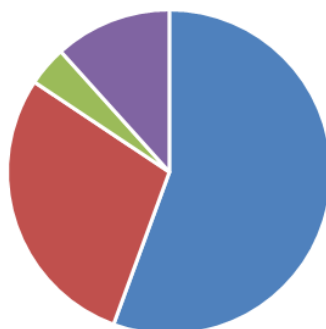


■ Yes    ■ No    ■ No preference

## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

Q2b. If yes, should we increase it from 80% to 82%, or a different amount?		Number of responses	Percent
Valid	More than 82%	238	39.9
	82%	123	20.6
	81%	17	2.8
	No preference	50	8.4
	Total	428	71.7

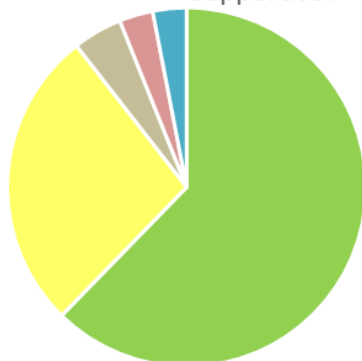
Q2b. If yes, should we increase it from 80% to 82%, or a different amount?



■ More than 82% ■ 82% ■ 81% ■ No preference

Q2c. Do you agree or disagree that in future years, subject to funding being available, we should continue to increase the maximum amount of CTR, to make the scheme more supportive?		Number of responses	Percent
	Strongly agree	266	44.6
	Tend to agree	116	19.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	19	3.2
	Tend to disagree	13	2.2
	Don't know / not sure	13	2.2
	Total	427	71.5

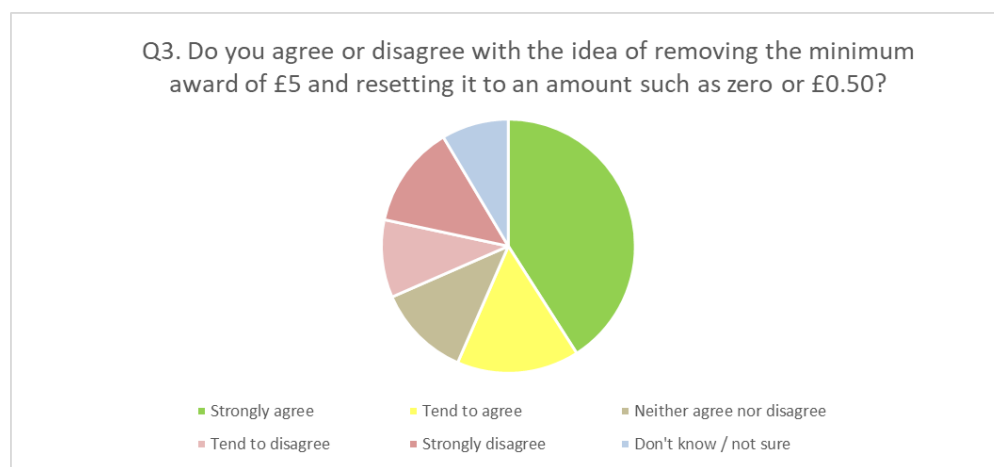
Q2c. Do you agree or disagree that in future years, subject to funding being available, we should continue to increase the maximum amount of CTR, to make the scheme more supportive?



■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree  
 ■ Tend to disagree ■ Don't know / not sure

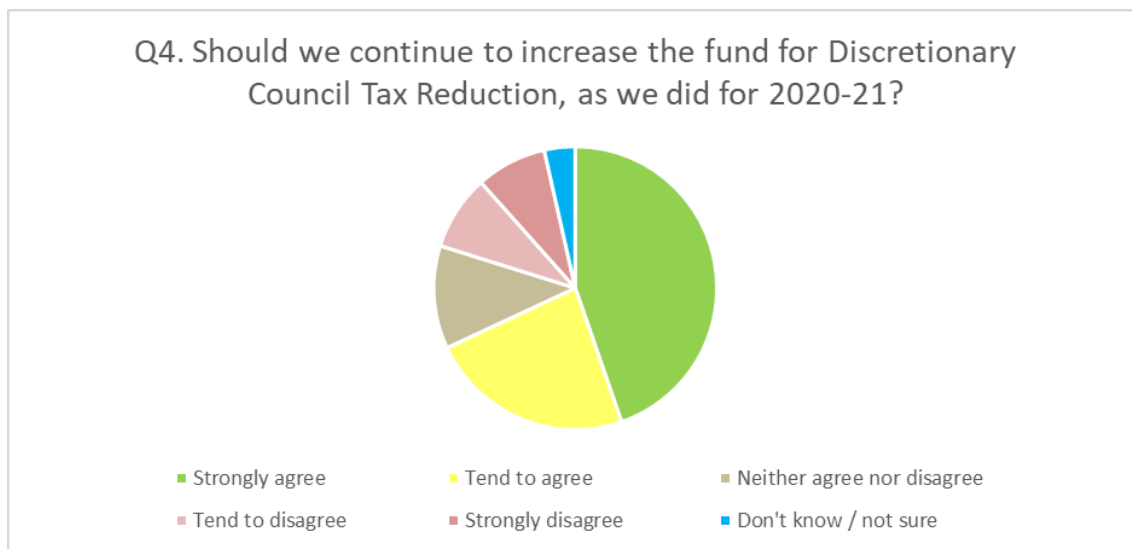
Removing the minimum award bar for CTR also proved popular, but at a notably lower rate than the other proposed measures. Around 56% supported this measure, still more than double the rate of those who did not agree.

<b>Q3. Do you agree or disagree with the idea of removing the minimum award of £5 and resetting it to an amount such as zero or £0.50?</b>		Number of responses	Percent
	Strongly agree	244	40.9
	Tend to agree	93	15.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	71	11.9
	Tend to disagree	59	9.9
	Strongly disagree	78	13.1
	Don't know / not sure	51	8.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>99.8</b>



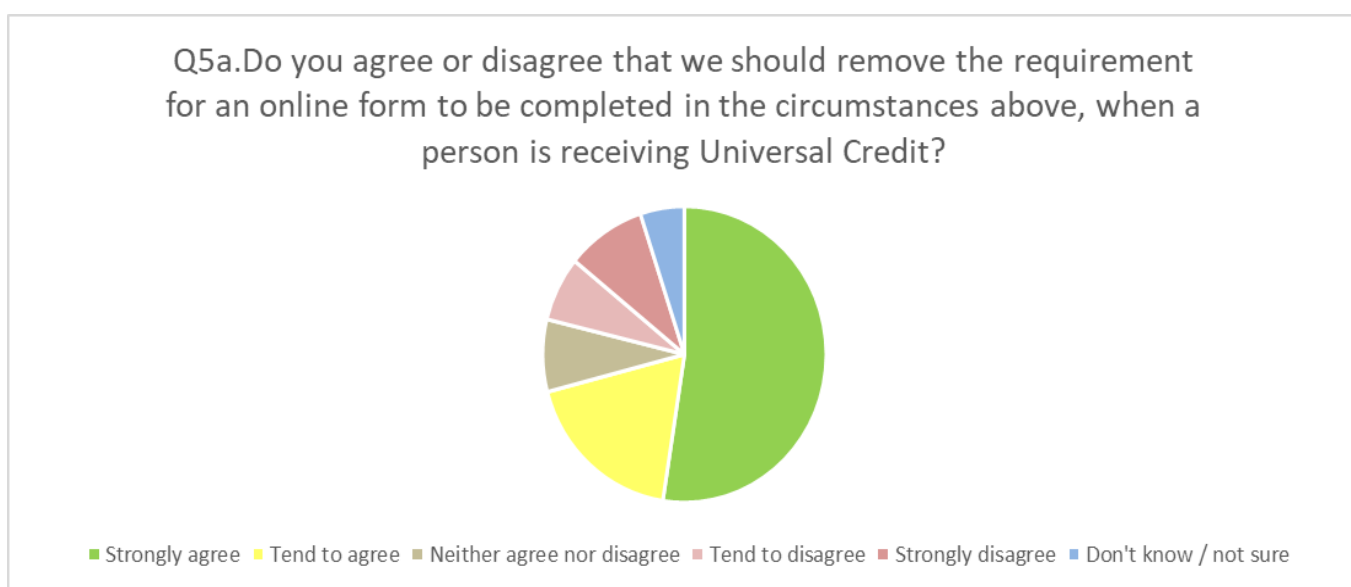
**There was strong support for increasing the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction fund.**

<b>Q4. Should we continue to increase the fund for Discretionary Council Tax Reduction, as we did for 2020-21?</b>		Number of responses	Percent
	Strongly agree	266	44.6
	Tend to agree	139	23.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	70	11.7
	Tend to disagree	51	8.5
	Strongly disagree	48	8.0
	Don't know / not sure	21	3.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>99.7</b>



There was strong support for the idea of removing the need for a claim form in circumstances where the person has already made a detailed claim to Universal Credit. Over 70% agreed with that proposal.

Q5a. Do you agree or disagree that we should remove the requirement for an online form to be completed in the circumstances above, when a person is receiving Universal Credit?		Number of responses	Percent
Strongly agree		312	52.3
Tend to agree		110	18.4
Neither agree nor disagree		47	7.9
Tend to disagree		42	7.0
Strongly disagree		54	9.0
Don't know / not sure		30	5.0
Total		595	99.7



## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

### Freeform comments

Across the consultation, there were several opportunities for additional comments to be made. Given the high number of consultation responses, there were a correspondingly high number of comments. These are covered in more detail from page 11 of this summary report. However, the following shows the most frequently occurring themes appearing in the comments, along with some example comments to represent the theme:

**For Q1 - Do you agree or disagree with making the CTR scheme more supportive to people on the lowest incomes, if funding allows? - Q1b. Do you have any further comments about the general principle of making the scheme more supportive?**

Theme	Mentions
All extra financial help is appreciated "Yes.. it is the kindest thing that you are recognising people in need."	77
Worried about income, including concerns about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food, fuel or general poverty</li> <li>• Debt</li> <li>• Covid reducing income</li> <li>• Self employed income</li> <li>• Universal Credit being reduced</li> </ul> <p>"I am struggling. I lost two jobs due to covid and whilst I had a low income. Everything went up in price and was struggling to find money for food. I had £25 left for food for last month but had to pay 95 council tax and I'm still in arrears. It's scary and stressful and feels like a punch to the stomach when I tell the council I am struggling."</p>	32
Not happy to increase CT to pay for it "I can understand the need for lower income people to have support but this scheme will mean more tax burden for those who fall outside the threshold for support and /or less public funds and neither of those options seem fair to me"	24
Impact on middle income households / just about managing – these often miss out on any help but struggle just as much, or more "More support, fine. But seems like the burden falls on those working and struggling but don't have incomes low enough for such support. It's always the middle that ends up paying when the richest properties are in the same band. Those on average incomes with decent jobs will end up paying more to support this, despite using less council services."	22
Worried services would be cut/reduced to pay for it "It will depend on how it's funded (ie. what is cut)"	17
Council/service costs are too high / services are poor/ salaries too high "Already council tax is far too high and this just means that my council tax will go up by more. Generally the council should do more to cut its costs and overheads and focus on providing better services such as weeding the pavements (not done around here for some time) and sorting potholes in the roads (opportunities missed to do so during lockdown). Why should people on modest incomes be burdened in order to give others a free ride?"	16



## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

<p>Living costs, travel costs and rents too high</p> <p>“Brighton is low on the quality of life index. Mainly because of exaggerated prices in rentals the past 15 years. Living costs compare to that of London's prime areas when the salaries are not the same! Minimum wage should match the one in London to justify the increase on monthly rent payments. Along with the council tax being charged.”</p>	<b>11</b>
<p>Would like council tax to be reformed overall</p> <p>“Council tax is very in balanced : single occupants, area, property type. End up paying more per person than those in multiple occupancy households plus the amount of student properties allowed in one area-who do not contribute.”</p>	<b>10</b>
<p>Improve access to / awareness of CTR</p> <p>“Access needs to be more visible, especially for new movers and new tenants. Hence on top of sending a bill; perhaps a letter could be attached to the bill for the CTR scheme and the different methods of application and insuring that they are easily digestible for the public.”</p>	<b>9</b>
<p>Council Tax is too high</p> <p>“Having recently been looking to move out of the area, council tax has been a huge factor. I didn't realise how high it was in B&amp;H and now I realise I can pay almost HALF in some areas of the country it makes me want to leave even more. The streets are absolutely filthy here for the price we're paying, if nothing else.”</p>	<b>8</b>
<p>Support people who need it, but not people who are taking advantage</p> <p>“Yes - we should support low paid people , but much more investigation to stop fraudulent claims.”</p>	<b>8</b>
<p>Happy to increase CT to pay for it</p> <p>“I would be PLEASED to pay more IF it will help people on low incomes.”</p>	<b>5</b>
<p>Amount to pay should be fair / those who can afford should pay for those who can't</p> <p>“You will probably read some horrible comments in here that will question your faith in humanity. Please know there are many of us who believe that we are only as strong as the most vulnerable in our community, and it is the responsibility of those of good fortune to do what we can for the betterment of us all.”</p>	<b>5</b>

**For Q5 - Do you agree or disagree that we should remove the requirement for an online form to be completed in the circumstances above, when a person is receiving Universal Credit?**

Themes	Mentions
<p>Removing the need for a form makes it easier</p> <p>“When someone is bombarded with too many forms when they are at rock bottom they need support not more forms. If they are entitled to universal credit then that is proof if enough! No need for more forms, keep it simple.”</p>	<b>51</b>

## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

Do sample checks / fraud concern mentioned  “The system should be as simple as possible but also have safe guards from abuse.”	<b>13</b>
Expectation of cost saving ( <i>nb.no cost saving is expected for this measure</i> )  “We must become more efficient by seeking out and removing duplication of effort such as that described above. If we do that, we will reduce our costs which will contribute to the additional costs of supporting those who need it most.”	<b>11</b>
Be clear about when people still need to do form  “Make it clear to all UC claimants as soon as possible that CTB is a different and separate scheme and may require additional details, so claimants are not confused. And contact those people repeatedly to obtain those details. Backdate any claims where the claimant has successfully claimed UC.”	<b>5</b>
whole system needs reform / increase support  “Join in campaign to get Government to reinstate CTR for those on lowest incomes”	<b>4</b>
Forms are stressful  “When someone is bombarded with too many forms when they are at rock bottom they need support not more forms. If they are entitled to universal credit then that is proof if enough! No need for more forms, keep it simple.”	<b>3</b>

### Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about Council Tax Reduction changes? - Final Comments

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Mentions</b>
Would like council tax to be reformed overall / government welfare policy needs to be changed, including comments about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging students for Council Tax</li> <li>• Reforming / improving housing stock</li> <li>• Not paying for uninhabited properties</li> <li>• Those with second homes paying more</li> <li>• Higher Council Tax rate for premium properties</li> </ul>	<b>27</b>
Worried about income, including concerns about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food, fuel or general poverty</li> <li>• Debt</li> <li>• Covid reducing income</li> </ul>	<b>23</b>

## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self employed income</li> <li>• Universal Credit being reduced</li> </ul> <p>“Please listen to the people like myself who are struggling because it’s people like us who are not living happy we are just about surviving and it’s hard work and puts so much stress on our family. It’s not nice having to ask for help but some people just have no choice”</p>	
<p>Impact on middle income households / just about managing</p> <p>“Individual situations dictate that every case should be looked at individually, and not based on the previous yers but a few months and the consequence of loosing your job, or as it's trendy now days to blame it for everything, Covid 19. I had enough money saved to survive 6 months, today I'm about to loose my property etc, because work is no longer there, AND I am NOT entitled to anything including Universal credit.”</p>	<b>17</b>
<p>Worried services would be cut/reduced</p> <p>“There was no information provided at all about the consequences of the Council wishing to increase this funding. How will it be financed? What will be reduced as a consequence or there might be plans to increase the council tax for everyone else? For the next consultation a bit more comprehensive information should be given to seek more valuable responses. Thank you!”</p>	<b>17</b>
<p>Thank you / strong endorsement</p> <p>“I am amazed that I got an email to be consulted on this, but proud that my council would do such a thing. Great work! Providing help to the poorest in our city has never been more important, preventing homelessness is a top priority at all times, not just during a pandemic.”</p>	<b>14</b>
<p>Worried about people who are vulnerable</p> <p>“Great idea. This is a way of helping a small but significant chunk of the city's population at a time when things are awful for all of us, but like whenever something bad happens, it is the poorest in society who suffer most. Reducing the threshold will embrace more people who are entitled for this, and this is a good thing. Keeping this ethos in place into the future will enshrine the principle that it is about helping people always not just on a one-off basis in times of crisis.”</p>	<b>11</b>
<p>Council costs /service costs/ services are poor/ salaries too high</p> <p>“I’m very unsupportive of any of this until I see evidence that the council is spending its money more sensibly. For example, tidy up Brighton as it’s becoming a graffitied dump, get rid of all the new ludicrous empty cycle lanes, discourage rough sleepers from sleeping in shop doorways etc. It used to be such a lovely welcoming town.”</p>	<b>11</b>
<p>All extra financial help is appreciated</p> <p>“as difficult as it is to balance the council books - this pales in comparison to someone trying to balance the books on £73 a week (current JSA levels) - please do all you can - I expect you've seen a rise in unpaid council tax of late, but lets face it, it's hardly surprising when it's simply impossible to live on post austerity benefits ...”</p>	<b>10</b>
<p>Council should provide additional financial advice or sustainability of infrastructure</p> <p>“The council is limited in its scope of what it can do, but it is the most important local organisation in terms of signalling, leadership and coordination.</p>	<b>8</b>

## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

<p>It would be a good idea to design and undertake some form of formative and summative evaluation of the proposals, based on a coherent monitoring framework so that their impact can be measured. In my view, this should mainly be quantitative and could look at spending patterns and debt levels of recipients and also focus on how this initiative links with other initiatives to improve poorer people's well-being."</p>	
<p>Not happy to increase CT to pay for it</p> <p>"If you go ahead, this should be funded from the existing budget. NOT an increase for other payers of council tax."</p>	<b>7</b>
<p>Don't agree with CTR / benefits</p> <p>"You claim that by handing out more financial assistance for those "apparently" in need would result in a reduction in council services. I do not believe this would be the case. What I do believe is that those who DO pay their way will in fact be hit with even larger bills to cover the shortfall."</p>	<b>7</b>

**Appendix – detailed comments section**

**Q: Do you agree or disagree with making the CTR scheme more supportive to people on the lowest incomes, if funding allows? - Q1b. Do you have any further comments about the general principle of making the scheme more supportive? (You will have an opportunity to answer questions about specific proposals in the following sections)**

**Don't know**

- Really need to know details i.e. how much would my Council Tax need to rise as I am on a pension but wouldn't qualify for help as I have savings.
- Where's the money coming from?
- Although my personal income hasn't fallen, I do have to give more financial support to my partner/children and I would still be expected to pay the full Council Tax, which I am finding harder. The Council Tax for 21/22 will no doubt be another maximum increase which worries me, but I don't feel I can support others by suggesting they pay less when I can't pay less, even though I am in difficulty myself.

**Neither agree no disagree**

- I'm all for helping people in dire straights, but am concerned about where the extra money will come from. If it means in an increase for others, I'm not so keen. In my case, I'm a single occupant so do get a reduction. I'm not on universal credit, but I don't earn a lot, and I've also been furloughed for 6 months so things are tight as it is. If my council tax gets increased because of this, it's going to stretch me.
- I believe it is important to provide support to the most financially vulnerable in the community. I would be concerned if additional support is provided by reducing other Council Services and benefits.
- Not enough information has been made available regarding where the budget impact would be and whether council tax increases are being considered to fund this initiative,
- As long as this scheme will not make council tax increases for the others, it's alright. However if this will lead to increase council tax I'm not agree with it.
- I think it depends on how quickly the economy bounces back. We could be back to normality by April 2021. I would also imagine that council taxes will need to rise next year and many of us have not had pay rises for a while so we could all do with a council tax freeze instead.

**Strongly/Tend to Disagree**

- Council finances are going to be in bad position because of COVID-19 so use the money for services needed by the city
- Making CTR more supportive might mean higher council tax bills for others, who are also on low incomes but who are not entitled to benefits.
- We are all struggling financially and have all had to tighten our belts. Offering further reductions for some, whilst increasing the tax to cover it for others, means that plants working people like myself will struggle further. Rather than alleviate pressure you'll actually widen the pressure

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load across more households. Council tax bills in B&H are already very expensive compared with many other local authorities.

- I would rather see funding being used to upskill, educate, develop skills, bring communities together, develop more sustainable living; than simply increasing finances.
- The scheme being more supportive is not bad per say, but the increase in cost to those who pay full council tax is a problem. I am not content paying extra council tax so those who do not work can live more comfortably.
- Council tax is already too high for those on middle incomes. Those on lowest incomes already receive a vast amount of support; 'normal' people should not have to subsidise their lifestyles by paying more council tax.
- Persons on low income receive benefits as a means of support. Council tax should reflect the services that each household receives.
- Should wait and see what central Govt do e.g. furlough scheme has already been extended 6 months. Central Govt should have prime responsibility
- You have not provided any statistics on the incomes of these houses, nor the percentage reduction. You are asking us to agree or disagree with a "morale principle", which I think is rather sneaky, considering the actual implications/changes are hidden/redacted. Further, it is quite clear that "Funding" does not "allow", as council tax will go up, for BHCC, for Sussex Police, for social care specifically And for FRS, - so this isn't a "if funding allows", its a "how much will we cut services here and there, whilst also increases taxes on everyone But the poorest. - It serves no logic. If these are the households which use the vast majority of council funded services, then cutting their payments whilst also cutting internal services is analogous to a starving man using his last paycheck for suicide, rather than buying a week's groceries.
- 'if funding allows' - this is misleading. Funding depends on increasing our contribution which I am against unless it's for material improvements to the city
- This should be centrally funded from the government as this will be across all locations in the UK. If it is done locally, how do we track and manage what is really required and what if things change? Would you reverse the decision or revisit it?
- More support, fine. But seems like the burden falls on those working and struggling but don't have incomes low enough for such support. It's always the middle that ends up paying when the richest properties are in the same band. Those on average incomes with decent jobs will end up paying more to support this, despite using less council services.
- I would like the government to provide more financial assistance rather than the burden being placed further on local councils.
- I think at the moment there is so much the council need to support especially in mental health and adult social care.
- the efforts are made to support only the lowest income, whilst standard families are struggling as well but not eligible to any form of support
- Not sure how this is helpful we are all in it together. Why is the cut not universal?
- Without seeing any figures as to show how a low income is defined, and how many dependants that income is to support, without further subsidies, then I can't give a definitive answer. The principle of the scheme is of course a good one to help people TEMPORARILY through this crisis, but I can't see this being possible without a detrimental impact to other public services and potentially burdening full council tax payers with tax rises.
- There is already support provided through government funded initiatives

### Strongly/Tend to Agree

- I think the idea that everyone should make a contribution to their council tax bill is sadly just impractical. The cost of chasing up unpaid council tax is surely greater than the revenue generated by low income families contributing towards their council tax bill. The system needs to be simplified and every time BHCC tries to simplify the system (e.g. the de minimus rules) it just makes it more complicated and expensive to administer.
- Years of austerity have made it incredibly difficult for people with a low income to pay their council tax, even at a reduced rate. People are struggling to buy food and pay bills, especially those on legacy benefits who bafflingly received no noticeable assistance to help them generally cope during the pandemic. How are such people expected to find money they simply do not have to pay a council tax bill?
- It's a direct and easy way to provide financial relief. Debt recovery, support for those in debt and assessment for discretionary relief all have their own costs.
- Yes as I am one of the people that this affects as I am disabled and am basically housebound also , you should also take into account of people like myself who also have to pay for health services on top of our other bills like care link and carers etc, that is in itself is a lot of extra money for people like myself to have to find to pay for these other services that we need, these should be ALWAYS taken into account when our council tax is to be looked into, these on average cost about an extra £50 a week and that's also excluding having any food services as well, and if you are like myself you are on legacy benefits which means that the government are illegally discriminating against EVERYONE on legacy benefits as we are not given the extra £80 a month for 12 months that people on Universal Credit receive and then there is disabled people who also have other health and care services like a car on motability, these cost about £50 a month upwards, and this is even before massive energy bills, Internet bills etc as well as trying to eat as well, unfortunately benefits even when they do go up, they do NOT go up in as much as the bills go up, so we are left with even less money, at 1 point of time, EVERYONE who was disabled didn't have to pay the council tax, now the benefits dont even pay for most of these services that anyone who is disabled needs to pay, my carers contribution is £35 a week, my care link is about £6.50 a week, this is roughly an extra £42 a week which is equal to a massive £168 a month, thats even before my other bills or my council tax amount on top of this huge amount. In my opinion these extra payments should ALWAYS be taken into account, as it is I cant afford all of my bills as it is, but I could not now go back to not having carers because of my health conditions getting worse since Covid-19.
- Yes we need to support families AND elderly isolated people who may need companionship and low level care to remain in their homes by providing free accommodation BUT not loose their right to single household status too.
- Should we even be questioning if we should offering the people struggling the most this support?
- This will make a big difference to people who are struggling to make ends meet. Council tax debt is pursued very strongly, and people are often forced to choose between paying council tax and paying for essentials like food, fuel and rent. Anything the council can do to ease this dilemma is very welcome.
- more support for low income, rather than non-working people
- Absolutely. This is a time of national crisis and if people lose their jobs or have reduced hours during this period of Covid-19 they should not be penalised further for this.

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- As someone who is in a family who both have lost jobs but we are just over the saving threshold we get absolutely NO help. So if the CTR scheme is on just income for this year, that would be much fairer.
- I as an individual living in Brighton for the last 9 years has never struggled more to pay for my household bills and council tax. I am self employed, working in teaching and the arts and I have been drastically affected by Covid. Like many of the other inhabitants of Brighton who work in the arts, I feel it's important to support those who make Brighton a cultural, creative and vibrant place to live.
- I am struggling. I lost two jobs due to covid and whilst I had a low income. Everything went up in price and was struggling to find money for food. I had £25 left for food for last month but had to pay 95 council tax and I'm still in arrears. It's scary and stressful and feels like a punch to the stomach when I tell the council I am struggling. Same response each time. You earn too much! £800 - £1000 a month wage is too much?! My rent is 900. It just seems to be worse than the last system. The last system you knew where you stood this system all bunched together makes even trying to tell someone you are struggling impossible. Please help us. I live alone and have to pay 95 a month for council tax when I use 1 bin bag a week. Never called the cops or used any of their services yet I just get threatened with action if I don't pay. I pay my road tax via the council coz I had to drive to that I understand in paying. To group council tax under this band is not fair!! I'm alone scared and hungry and council don't care they just want their money.
- I'd like to understand where the funding would be coming from to support this scheme but I am generally on support of helping those struggling
- I absolutely agree that this is the right thing to do.
- Council tax is very unbalanced : single occupants, area, property type. End up paying more per person than those in multiple occupancy households plus the amount of student properties allowed in one area-who do not contribute.
- Waiving council tax entirely for people with no employment would be suitable since they have no means to pay it and little means to gain employment during the pandemic.
- Need to help people, but costs should be realised through efficiency saving measures at the council.
- I think the scheme should be more supportive especially as some residents are all ready on furlough and struggling to live on less lower income like other residents on benefits
- If you lower council tax for those who are financially vulnerable, would that mean you will raise them for people who don't qualify (but might be struggling unbeknownst to you)? Will the council effectively be subsidising the income of private landlords who charge extortionate rents? Could landlords do their bit, and lower rents during this difficult time (they are very high for what you get anyway) and perhaps the utility companies could do their bit too, if they are not already? It seems to me that there are people/companies whose income will not be interrupted and in fact they do very nicely whatever the economic climate - then the burden gets passed on to other council tax payers. I think this inherently unfair and antisocial.
- Disabled people should not have to pay council Tax
- The scheme should automatically support pensioners.
- thank you for your support
- It will depend on how it's funded (ie. what is cut)
- I am self employed with no profit so maximum working tax credit which is less than universal credit and I can NOT afford the council tax, it adds up to a weeks worth of my money every month



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- Covid has been devastating and we owe a duty of care to those hit the hardest. I would be happy to see my council tax increase if that funded reductions for the most vulnerable.
- Everyone with reduced income (due to not being able to work in Lockdown) should have their Council Tax discounted
- I believe in making it more affordable, for example. I am in a tiny one-bedroom flat in Kemptown with my partner, we are in our 20's and are trying to save to buy a house. The £130.00 a month we are charged takes a significant dent out of our income, it is also more than our parents pay for 3/4 bedroom houses in Kent an equally affluent area. It seems slightly mismatched.
- The council should be more supportive with the sick, unemployed, disabled that are really struggling. They also need to consider business through a bad patch and some charities that enjoy the privileged status but revert little or nothing towards the community.
- We, the people have a real difficulty to understand the high salaries and benefits that some council workers enjoy at the cost of charging council tax to people in a mere weekly £71.
- I think the main point is to ensure that those who are involuntarily on the lowest incomes receive the support that they need. The question is whether a modest (£35 per year) reduction is the best way of doing this. I don't know. Any proposal, such as this, needs to be considered within the context of a wide package of monetary and non-monetary support. There is a risk that, seen in isolation, the impact of the initiative is of insufficient scale to be noticeable to the recipients at an individual level, but is viewed as an expensive cost at aggregated level.
- In the pandemic era, it would be appropriate to give the citizens a discount until they can get back to normality? You are punishing the majority of people who pay council tax every year without fail. Some of us may be experiencing some difficulties, and it would be decent and considerate to discount the council tax for all during the pandemic. In fact, council services are running at half the capacity and therefore we all are entitled to pay accordingly? Not ask us to pay the usual amount when the service provided by the council is running at half the capacity!?
- As long as funding is not taken away from essential services to facilitate this - i.e. it does not affect general healthcare services.
- Cut back on non-essential services before thinking about raising council tax.
- People should pay according to their ability
- I think the threshold for help should be increased. It is currently extremely low, and I think many who have had to start working part time will miss out on CTR, even though they can sometimes struggle just as much as those who are not working.
- I think you have to balance it out between supporting those with the greatest need and keeping all the important council services up and running.
- Happy to see extra support to people on very low income. Please don't increase council tax for those on fairly low incomes - e.g. as a nurse I earn about £24,000 p.a. which is only enough to make ends meet and I wouldn't want an increase in Council tax, but don't expect extra support either.
- Should be able to support more working family's
- My husband is a part time carer working in the community he earns around £800 per month. We also have two teenage children who both have autism and one also has adhd and can be quiet a hand full for myself hence the reason my husband can only work part time so he can help out at home more often. I get carers allowance for one of my children yet we are earning too much money to be able to get help with the council tax. Each month it's a struggle paying my council tax on top of all the other bills we have to pay. It seems that the people who are trying and working but are earning low amounts are the ones who are struggling the hardest with having to take time off work every time they have a temperature because of covid my husband also

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doesn't get paid for the first 3 days he is off sick so our income has dropped and goes up and down each month as we never know what work my husband is going to get given until the day before. Also with universal credit because it's always a month behind when we are in a month that my husband hasn't been given much work then we won't get the extra UC until the month after and by then it's too late as fines for late payments have already been given. It would be a massive help to my self and other family's in the same situation if you could change the max your allowed to earn to claim higher so those on low working incomes can benefit and not have to worry from one day to the next.

- We were told we earn too much to get a reduction which was heartbreaking as we're barely managing and finding £146 a month has been crippling so I would like to see the threshold made more accessible
- The poorest should be supported by those who can afford it. Not necessarily by those in the poshest houses. There are people on limited or fixed incomes who live in expensive areas.
- I agree with the principle of making the scheme more supportive but the process of deciding who actually needs the support has to be very stringent. I am concerned if there will be council tax rise to fund that. We just had a rise and it will be a huge burden on those who are not claiming CTR.
- You will probably read some horrible comments in here that will question your faith in humanity. Please know there are many of us who believe that we are only as strong as the most vulnerable in our community, and it is the responsibility of those of good fortune to do what we can for the betterment of us all.
- Concerns about where the cut off point is set and the effect on households who fall just below.
- The council tax is generally too high for all, so that needs to be considered
- I believe that Council should also consider working single parents and single adult houses. Covid 19 increased costs in childcare meaning that not only lower income but also higher expenses.
- I think the up and down nature of the changes that people are going through with changes to support levels through covid is going to be harder than any part of it. Giving something and then taking it away is problematic.
- Cost of living has gone up tremendously, especially food cost and that's was even before covid. As a single working parent I am struggling and even more so now during covid. The cost of having my college son home 6/7 days a week has been crippling my finances as he's not getting his free meal, electricity bill has obviously gone up and so has everything else. Means other bills have to be sacrificed and debt rises.
- I am currently on universal credit and get 1343.00 per month for my household but do not qualify for council tax reduction and my rent is 1250.00 per month not leaving enough to live on yet alone pay my council tax which is getting in serious arrears but have nowhere else to go for help
- I am 100% supportive of it as long as those who continue to pay CT aren't expected to pay an increase in their payments to cover it. We are all suffering.
- The scheme should be more supportive and available, if not to everyone, then at least to as many people as the council can afford. There are a staggering amount of people in Brighton and Hove who are employed in either hospitality or the arts, and given that these two industries seem to be taking the brunt of the burden imposed by covid-19, it only seems fair that the myriad of people who now find themselves earning 80% of their wages on furlough (if they're lucky enough to even get furlough) shouldn't be paying the same amount of council tax which they were before. After all, many of us are now using the council's services less and less given that we are spending more and more time at home. Why should the amount paid remain the

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same if this is the case? I strongly feel that the scheme should be more supportive for people in low income, and feel that the criteria needed to apply for the scheme should be much more generous. The scheme should be more supportive and accessible to more people.

- It should be offered to more people. It strikes me that the definition of "low income" doesn't actually cover a lot of people who struggle on their income
- I do believe in supporting those on low incomes, however you need to understand the implications to those who are considered to be on a living wage too. £19K pa, living alone, paying all the bills doesn't mean you're solvent!

**Q: Do you agree or disagree that we should remove the requirement for an online form to be completed in the circumstances above, when a person is receiving Universal Credit? - Q5b. Do you have any comments or is there anything we have not considered in relation to Removing the online claim form for Universal Credit claimants?**

### Don't know/ Neither agree or Disagree

- The system should be as simple as possible but also have safe guards from abuse.
- How much of the current council tax is going towards the bureaucratisation of this ludicrously complicated assessment?
- If you automatically provide CTR for UC claimants, will it be easier for claimants to hide 'non-dependent' households? If so, then I am against it. If not, I'm for it
- Surely the DWP can include the questions the council requires in their claim for universal credit. Making it far more streamlined???

### Strongly/Tend To Disagree:

- In an ideal world we could just accept the claim details from UC as a claim for CTR. But UC are so bad at collecting and interpreting information that I wouldn't trust the details they pass on. During Covid they accepted a lot of claims they knew were fraudulent - do we really want to use such details?
- If they are completing everything online it should all be covered. There should be no need for more work to achieve many items when one element is already being done. Keep it simple for claimants, always.
- Stringent checks should be maintained. An additional application form and process will help ensure this.
- Unless it requires substantial additional work to assess these claim forms, you have just stated in the text above, that 13% needs further checks that includes fraud checks. Please do make sure that the council tax paid by us is only allocated to those who comply with all requirements and are in need of it. The city is a bad state, and there are many ways how the same pot of money could be spent rather usefully.
- Although I understand why this question is being asked, and although I do in principle agree with streamlining, I see this as checks and balances to make sure information is correct and the people who need the money are getting it.

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- If the requirement for a form is removed, 13% of UC claimants would receive CTR automatically when they are not actually entitled to it. At least, this is how your explanation above reads.
- CTR is a separate benefit, just as National Health Service reductions are awarded separately for anyone in a low non-means tested situation.
- I think the Council should help people who genuinely need it and to this end. I think it would be advisable for the claim form for universal credit claimants to stay in existence. Also I hope that for people who don't have an on line facility, paper claim forms can be sent.
- Claimants need to be transparent and this prompts that

### Strongly/Tend to Agree

- This will help the people who are digitally unable to apply easily or unable to comprehend the fact that they need to make a second claim for something that they've already been asked by UC.
- Will produce efficiencies which is good
- Im on legacy benefits so Universal Credit doesn't affect me at all, but it seems totally stupid to have both the DWP and yourselves doing this, its just a complete waste of time.
- When someone is bombarded with too many forms when they are at rock bottom they need support not more forms. If they are entitled to universal credit then that is proof if enough! No need for more forms, keep it simple.
- All simplifications/ "tell-us-once" measures most welcome.
- Yes the online form should be discontinued especially as the council already have the claimants circumstances and benefit records to hand either from the housing benefit team at the council or from the DWP as this forms a cause great distress and not everybody has access to the Internet or is able to complete these forms online due to not having knowledge of how to go online like some elderly residents or people who can't afford a smart phone or tablet and have no access to the Internet
- This should result in administrative cost saving so this should be quantified as part of this proposal.
- These things are always complicated to design and manage. However, the principle should be to focus on reducing unnecessary bureaucratic processes and simplifying access even if this results in some moral hazard. The issue of waste and moral hazard are not primarily about benefits for poor people; they are probably much more of an issue amongst higher income groups.
- It should be considered that removing additional barriers to making a claim would reduce administrative burden and unnecessary complexity - it does not make sense to duplicate application requirements.
- Various departments should work closely and tightly to reduce cost to the departments and council as well as make it easier to the vulnerable to fill one form and have all departments act on it. The council must ensure tighter collaboration and minimal hurdles required for people to get to the process they need to.
- Checking for fraud should exist at all levels.
- When i made a claim for universal credit i wasn't told to apply seperately for CTR. I found out from someone else. The whe system needs a proper revamp!
- Improve process, and eliminate duplication and form filling. In 2019, the two did not link up properly. I am still paying back an over-payment of CTR as a result, despite my calls to update the council after a change to my circumstances, ie employment.

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- The fact that you are considering all this warms my heart.
- Why would the Council ever have required UC claimants to unnecessarily submit a 2nd benefit claim form? Such practice smacks of administration seeking to immorally 'minimise' benefit uptake.
- Common sense.
- This should also apply when UC stops. I got screwed for a lot of money because departments didn't talk to each other
- All the forms can be highly stressful for applicants, so if there's an unnecessary one, get ride of it. Make it easier.
- Remove this duplicated step will not only make it easier for claimants but also easier for the council to administer
- As long as it is made clear to the claimant whether they fall into the exceptional category where they are claiming UC but still have to do a form because of the other circumstances listed above. The system MUST be really transparent and straightforward for the claimant. It can be very difficult for someone who is on a low income or vulnerable due to disability or chronic illness to navigate all the forms and procedures so it must be guided clearly.
- It seems a waste of time to have to process a further online form when information is already available from UC claim
- Concerned additional online forms are difficult to complete for people with limited literacy or IT skills so any reduction in form filling would be good.
- I really think this should happen as I did not realise that I had to inform council tax when this happened to me and I have still had to pay the council tax for the 6 months I had assumed universal credit had taken care of. I felt that it was a unfair trap that was not fully explained.
- its 2020 just make life simpler
- Dropping an unnecessary form would save time and resources dedicated to administration over this particular area of the process.
- Use the money saved on admin to help support the CTR scheme.
- Providing we can rely on the information being provided by the DWP and receive that information as soon as it's available. Currently there's often a substantial delay of 2-3 months
- If nothing else is done, this change should definitely be implemented. The Council have the opportunity to remove a layer of bureaucracy that should not be there in the first place and I trust that the Council will act accordingly
- We must become more efficient by seeking out and removing duplication of effort such as that described above. If we do that, we will reduce our costs which will contribute to the additional costs of supporting those who need it most.

### Is there anything we haven't considered or any further comments you'd like to make about Council Tax Reduction changes? - Final Comments

- Scheme should be run in way which avoids extra paperwork and time spent on very small claims.
- Given that the majority of public properties (museums, schools, etc) have been closed/unavailable for use for prolonged periods of time there should be a general reduction in the amount charged this year. This amount will be covered by the reduction in damage, maintenance, heating, etc. required by the properties during their unused periods.

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- Aim to be more proactive when someone first gets in to CT arrears, to check what is going on and what help can be put in from the start around benefits, and other financial inclusion support to prevent people getting into long term difficulty.
- Make it targeted towards single person households as well as families.
- You might like to consider an option of people paying more? A flexible contribution added either a percentage or specific amount. There are many generous people around and could consider their own circumstances to assist.
- What does “if funding allows” mean?!! The whole consultation appears to assume that Government funding for temporary support will not continue. Therefore the term “if funding allows” is vague and misleading. It’s very hard to support the proposal without knowing how it’s going to be funded!!!
- Council tax needs to be reduced for ALL, not for the few.
- Make DCTR available in 'lump sums' if necessary (like HBDP), rather than it having to be attached to benefit periods. The current method is seriously limiting DCTR's effectiveness in helping those in the most serious financial problems.
- Look at reform and restructuring in order to reduce Council Tax bill for all - as it has 'peaked' for many/most households - but ensure discretionary help is available in special cases.
- Let's do all we can to help those most in need. Good work!
- Just make the process easier and less stressful for people in need of this crucial help particularly during COVID 19.
- There needs to be balance which avoids people on low income who are not claiming paying more to help people on lower income. a payment of 20% would appear to be reasonable considering all the other calls on the councils finances.
- See earlier comment. This needs to be fairer to all based on income right now, in these challenging times. If not eligible for universal credit you can't get Any help with Anything at all, which seems wrong.
- I would like some more information as to how these will be funded. Which services are being considered for cuts? What new / increased funding streams are being contemplated?
- The discount for living alone should be significant! This is a very large outgoing for people to consider and not everyone is in a position to live with others.
- As before. We are all struggling and will continue to do so for years to come as our economy recovers. We all just need to knuckle down and work hard and bear the short term financial pains. Handing out more money To people isn’t the answer. Spending money on employment opportunities and training is a better use of taxes.
- The government have made multiple changes and given more and more money to help people in difficulty. To then take more money from local councils and their services to further subsidise just seems completely counterproductive - it’s just robbing Peter to pay Paul
- Increasing the single person's allowance from 25% to 50% it is very difficult for a single person to be paying 75% council tax along with all other bills and rent.
- If you raise council tax next year, then any changes you make to CTR are just going to result in a 'freeze' rather than a reduction for the people concerned. It doesn't sound as though it's going to help much. Rather than try and fiddle around with council tax, the pressure needs to be on utility companies and landlords to reduce their bills/rent. I think you're trying to be helpful, but you're just pissing in the wind (not being rude). This needs to be approached from a whole different angle, and you need to be a lot tougher with those who are making huge profits and offering poor service in the city. This is a very expensive city in which to live, and it DOESN'T provide the quality of life that it should. Landlords are driving Ferraris and the properties are

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dire! I also think wages in some sectors are quite low for such an expensive city - and considering we are living in the 21st Century!

- I am a variable hours worker, so I think that there should be provision made to award discount in individual months, rather than just annually. Although I have worked full time for this company for the last 10 years, my contract changed 2 years ago. As we are currently undergoing talks re. redundancy I may have to cut my hours or be completely cut from the company for a few months. It would be good to have the flexibility of a reduction month on month.
- I want to know what services are at risk of budget cuts, and where additional funding would come from before wholeheartedly supporting this.
- Increasing the discount for single income households where one is a student and the other is working
- There are people who are above the CTR funding line who still struggle. Do not increase funding for those under it when there are students leaving university and young people struggling to find affordable homes.
- Unpaid Family and Friend Carers should have an extra CTR discount entitlement.
- Should be targeted to help very lowest income, not extended to cover new people unless they fall into category due to reduced income, not sensible to lower thresholds
- Tax BTL, second home and holiday let owners to make up any shortfall in council income.
- Just that I'm receiving £383 a month UVC and have to pay £101 a month council tax how can I possibly pay it
- You guys always did an amazing job for the community keep up the good job. Thank you
- Yes - Central Government should sort this out nearer the time when we know what the situation is, not 6 months in advance, we could easily have a vaccine by Xmas - read the news
- As stated before, a small decrease/change in council tax will lead to nearly No benefit for the households at hand over the course of the months to come. It will however lead to reduced funding for the services on which these people rely. Why not use that money, instead for a few more key workers to support communities and help people develop themselves, or reduce exploitation and addition, and safeguard vulnerable children and families? - I'm sure the homeless could do with a discount to their hostels, "if funding allows"... They always seem to need a few more pounds for a place to sleep tonight. This seems like a terrible exercise of short-sightedness.
- Realistically there will be further hardship in 2021 as a result of COVID-19 and a committed increase for 2021 would help. I am very supportive of reducing complexity by removing duplicative forms when a universal credit application is made.
- Increased transparency and proactive publication of support provision and council performance needs to be alongside any changes.
- Like, I said the council must work closely and tightly with each other and fix disparaging systems that are making the council having to keep few systems up to date. Streamline so save money. The council must also extend CTR to people who are over 50 years old, and even if they are working, they are the most susceptible to mental and health risks. Some folks lost their job because of the pandemic and yet are not getting CTR?
- I approve of the efforts here but I would emphasise that more needs to be done to address HB rather than CT.
- You have said nothing about whether any of this initiative would be funded through council tax rises, and if not, which areas would be impacted by reduced budgets.
- If you go ahead, this should be funded from the existing budget. NOT an increase for other payers of council tax.

## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

- There was no information provided at all about the consequences of the Council wishing to increase this funding. How will it be financed? What will be reduced as a consequence or there might be plans to increase the council tax for everyone else? For the next consultation a bit more comprehensive information should be given to seek more valuable responses. Thank you!
- Looking at the people around me, we are all having difficulties. Personally I think it should remain the same but use the discretionary payments when needed.
- The majority of the people living in this City do not fall into the disadvantaged category in the way other areas of this country might be represented so I would urge the council to think about supporting the 'squeezed middle' we are the ones that need assistance
- I am amazed that I got an email to be consulted on this, but proud that my council would do such a thing. Great work! Providing help to the poorest in our city has never been more important, preventing homelessness is a top priority at all times, not just during a pandemic.
- Generally your CTR regime seems very favorable with such large discounts. Why not have a more staggered discount ladder to reduce the overall cost which after all falls to the other council tax payers.
- I am caught in a trap. Reduced hours to look after elderly mother. On minimum wage but no longer entitled to any benefits as don't work 30 hours. Work too much to claim carers allowance but annual take home is less than £10k per year. I would be better off not working and claiming benefits. Because I work I get penalised I get no help with council tax, take home less than 800 a month and pay 115 a month in council tax.
- I'd like the city council to also consider those who are not necessarily on low income, but might also struggle financially during this pandemic. Just because we're not on the lowest band of income does not mean that we don't have financial challenges. If we're to make the city fairer, everyone (even those on relatively high income) should benefit.
- I note that those in Council Tax Band D are entitled to claim 80% CTR. Band D suggests a large property. I am an advocate of helping those who help themselves but still cannot manage on their income, and of those who would otherwise fall through the gaps. I am not in favour of helping those who are living in large or expensive properties because they have a choice to adjust their circumstances. I would prefer to see Band D out of the equation. I would also like to know how the Council ensures claims are valid.
- Your proposed changes e.g. moving from 80% to 82% will make very little difference to a household income over a year but will make a huge dent in the council's funds so it seems fruitless
- Burdening the rest of us with hundreds of thousands of £ in costs to only save someone a few quid won't help us or them.
- Personally I think it's terrible that people on the lowest incomes are still asked to contribute 20%. Single people also living with disabled children get no extra help, just the 25% discount, regardless of the extra costs to them. The whole system needs looking at properly.
- I think anyone with a special needs person in the house should have to pay no council tax and not have to provide bank statements etc just DLA/PIP proof
- It should be automatic if someone has to apply for Universal Credit. Remove the duplication and room for errors.
- I wasn't even aware of the hardship form so this should be better publicised
- Can it please be available for those on Working Tax Credits or Child Tax Credits too
- I would like council tax to be reduced further for lowest income households, but you haven't said what other budgets for other services might be cut to fund this- without knowing that I can't express what I think the priorities should be



## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

- As CT is in essence a community tax I disagree that any such tax should be lowered. Rent caps should be introduced in the city and the minimum wage increased. I also work in the fraud world and believe such schemes are highly manipulated.
- I found the wording of the questions hard to understand what you meant (in the survey). Universal credit is a nightmare of a benefit, definitely make people's lives easier if possible. Also, increase the CTR to 100%. I receive full housing benefit for where we're living (full LHA) and as it's the Brighton rental market, I still have to pay a shortfall of £200 every month!! I seriously struggle to make ends meet and council tax on top of that is a real strain.
- I think supporting those most vulnerable in our community is the most important thing at any time but especially now. I strongly agree with steps being taken to do as much as we possibly can. Thank you for providing this
- Is there any way you could ask B&H council tax payers if they would be willing to pay more council tax in order to help the Council fund vital support services during this crisis? Some of us have not lost our jobs or seen a fall in our income. If you could do this, count me in.
- I personally think that people who are/were on u/c through COVID 19 were a lot better off than people who work that needed more help. I didn't even know that there was a discretionary payment plan maybe bit more guidance and publicity about it would of come handy for people that may of needed it
- Thank you for publishing this Consultation, and sending email alerting me and others to it. Thank you for caring.
- Council tax is too expensive even for people seemingly to have good income and need to be adjusted for all
- Allowing people to have informed opinions by advising where the money comes from to increase the reductions.
- if your universal credit does not cover your rent and living allowance council tax should be reduced or covered as this causes stress worry and families not being able to eat or have all the facilities they need
- The council is already struggling for money and will be more so ongoing. Giving more away in this current situation is not financially sensible as you have all citizens of B & H to think about. This idea will put more strain on the many families who sit just above being eligible for this benefits scheme but whom are also on low wages but who have to pay full Council Tax (which will no doubt increase to pay for others non payments - someone has to pay for it eventually). There is always a divide between the figure to qualify for assistance and the family who sits just above it and ends up financially crushed by further benefits being awarded. I know as I was there for many years as a single working parent with no financial help other than my modest salary. Taxation across the board will inevitably increase to pay for these schemes. Do not give away more money than you can afford!
- During the current economic hardship we need to support everyone to get through together
- Why is the threshold of savings that a person has before they are allowed to claim CTR so much lower in Brighton than anywhere else in the country? So many of us are losing our jobs, Brighton council is certainly ensuring that they get the biggest cut of the meager redundancy payments we receive first! Absolutely disgusting!
- The discretionary fund is vital as long as we can't afford 100% CTR.
- I think that 2021 will be extra hard for people on low incomes for obvious reasons. My feeling is that perhaps given the councils financial situation that this extra freedom of reduction continues for another year but then reverts back to pre covid arrangement. This allows people time to

## Council Tax Reduction Consultation 2021-22 Summary

recover financially.. the most in need but doesn't create a huge ongoing expense issue for bhcc either.

- This consultation implies that any additional costs to the proposed changes cannot be funded by the Council's existing budget, and it is of grave concern that any additional costs will have to be met by those whose income has not been affected, or is above a certain threshold which is grossly unfair. The government is already providing benefits to those affected by Covid, which is a temporary situation and should not be the driver for changes to the CTR criteria. Additionally, council tax charges are already influenced by assumptions on levels of income, with charges being extremely high in the more affluent areas. We worked hard to achieve what we have, but have now retired and so we do not earn the same level as income as we previously did although we have been able to maintain the council tax charges. If these increase for us, they will become unaffordable.
- I do think that everyone should pay something. We need to focus on making the system efficient to administer. Could the council publish some info on the admin costs of collecting the council tax and admin.
- as long as the council tax reduction is made as fair as possible, without the social care needs of the community suffering I would be happy to go along with the council decisions
- For the cost of 3 packets of cigarettes a year for a claimant, I strongly believe the Council can spend the same amount of money more effectively for the whole community. But claimants should have a much simpler process and easier route to securing support.

## Council Tax Reduction Review for 2021-22 – List of changes in previous years

Change date	Changes
<b>1 April 2014</b>	No changes
<b>1 April 2015</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maximum amount of capital a person can hold and still claim CTR reduced from £16,000 to £6,000.</li> <li>2. Amounts for non-dependent deductions doubled (the amounts non-dependents are expected to contribute to Council Tax).</li> <li>3. Second Adult Rebate scheme ended. This was an alternative non-means-tested version of Council Tax Reduction, where the presence of a second adult could result in a partial Council Tax discount, regardless of the income held by the main householder.</li> <li>4. The maximum CTR a person of working age can receive was changed from 91.5% to 85%.</li> </ol>
<b>1 April 2016</b>	The maximum CTR a person of working age can receive was changed from 85% to 80%.
<b>1 April 2017</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The taper rate was changed from 20p to 25p .This is the amount CTR goes down by for every extra £1 in the income a household receives above their assessed needs.</li> <li>2. Maximum possible CTR is limited to the equivalent amount available for a Band D property.</li> <li>3. Minimum CTR award is set at £5.00 per week. If entitlement calculation is less than that, no CTR is awarded.</li> </ol>
<b>1 April 2018</b>	No changes
<b>1 April 2019</b>	Minimum change rule introduced. If a person has a change of circumstances but it would not alter their entitlement by more than £2, the change is not passed onto them.



## Ward breakdown of CTR caseload (working age and pensioner cases)

Ward	Properties	CTR Claimants	%	% Variance vs Average
Brunswick & Adelaide	6,883	741	10.77%	-2.80%
Central Hove	6,817	709	10.40%	-3.17%
East Brighton	7,465	2,055	27.53%	13.96%
Goldsmid	8,976	1,004	11.19%	-2.38%
Hangleton & Knoll	6,485	1,279	19.72%	6.15%
Hanover & Elm Grove	7,292	936	12.84%	-0.73%
Hollingdean & Stanmer	6,551	1,330	20.30%	6.73%
Hove Park	4,504	230	5.11%	-8.46%
Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	6,475	1,350	20.85%	7.28%
North Portslade	4,350	733	16.85%	3.28%
Patcham	6,241	694	11.12%	-2.45%
Preston Park	7,502	662	8.82%	-4.74%
Queen`s Park	9,718	1,933	19.89%	6.32%
Regency	8,028	702	8.74%	-4.82%
Rottingdean Coastal	7,844	648	8.26%	-5.31%
South Portslade	4,599	757	16.46%	2.89%
St.Peter`s & North Laine	11,676	1,203	10.30%	-3.26%
Westbourne	5,415	643	11.87%	-1.69%
Wish	4,899	597	12.19%	-1.38%
Withdean	6,647	523	7.87%	-5.70%
Woodingdean	4,205	582	13.84%	0.27%
	142,572	19,311	13.57%	



## Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (EIA)

<b>Title of EIA</b>	<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021/22</b>	<b>ID No.</b>	1
<b>Team/Department</b>	Revenues and Benefits		
<b>Focus of EIA</b>	<p>The focus of this EIA is the impact of what the proposed change to the Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme from April 2020 would mean for recipients of CTR.</p> <p>The proposals are all designed to make the scheme more generous for those who are eligible to receive it. They are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The maximum amount of CTR any household can claim should be increased from 80% to 82% of a Band D property.</li> <li>• The minimum award of Council Tax Reduction is reduced from £5.00 to either 50p, 20p or 1p.</li> <li>• A budget of £0.200m is allocated for the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction fund.</li> <li>• The requirement for completing a Council Tax Reduction claim form be removed for Universal Credit recipients, in the circumstances described in para 4.9 of the report.</li> </ul> <p>Previous EIA's cover the existing Council Tax Reduction scheme, including all of its amendments to date. The focus of this EIA is therefore to examine the change proposed for the 2021/22 year.</p> <p>Some groups of people sharing protected characteristics are disproportionately likely to be recipients of CTR (e.g.: disabled people, women as heads of lone parent households and people in some age groups). Any changes in personal circumstances will be entirely dependent on the individual's circumstances however, and no trends have been identified that disproportionately disadvantage or benefit people sharing characteristics. As the proposed changes are designed to make the scheme more generous and apply across the board to all eligible recipients of CTR, no negative consequence to particular characteristic groups have been identified.</p> <p>The cost of the scheme will be an estimated £0.356m recurrently plus an additional £0.190m one-off funding. Potential implications of these changes are that the money will either need to be found from within existing budgets, or that it could form part of the considerations for increasing the council tax rate in 2021/22. In the first scenario, services used by the same vulnerable households that would benefit from the changes could be reduced. Any proposal of this kind would have an EIA which would then explore any potential negative impacts on protected characteristic groups. In the second scenario, an increase in the Council Tax rate will mean additional cost for every rate paying household in the city. However, because this impact would apply to each household, regardless of protected characteristics, no particular negative consequences have been identified.</p>		

## Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

For clarity all disproportionate impacts on specific groups are highlighted in the single section below.

Overall impacts and notes:

- The proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction scheme are positive for those who are eligible to receive Council Tax Reduction. Therefore, there are no identified negative impacts on protected characteristic groups.
- If there is a Council Tax rise, there will be a disadvantage to a larger group of people, but as they will not be recipients of Council Tax Reduction, they will be the least economically disadvantaged households in the city. Any EIA within a proposal to increase Council Tax will explore these negative impacts in more detail.
- Any proposal to reduce services in order to pay for the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme will explore in detail the potential consequences of such actions against specific protected characteristic groups.
- 

### Potential issues

- As the proposed scheme is for positive changes, no issues have been identified for low income households who may fall into the protected characteristic groups.
- That in order to pay for the proposed changes, the money will have to be found from within existing budgets or that the Council Tax will need to be increased.

### Mitigating actions

- That due consideration be given so that any reduction in council services does not disproportionately impact the vulnerable households that proposed changes seek to help.

The following mitigations exist in general for the CTR scheme to guard against disproportionate negative consequence of the CTR scheme in general:

- Continue to provide a discretionary fund which can be used to increase the amount of CTR anyone can get if they face exceptionally difficult circumstances. Review take up of the discretionary fund to make sure it is being taken up where there is a need
- Ensure there is availability of advice within the city so people can receive help dealing with benefits, payment of council tax, budgeting and moving towards work.

### Actions planned

The possible impact on services is highlighted in the main CTR review report for Policy & Resources Committee and then full Council to consider in January 2021. Any individual service proposals will be subject to their own EIA's in their relevant service areas.



**NOTICE OF MOTION  
LABOUR GROUP & GREEN GROUP****EVICCTIONS**

This Council notes that protection of private sector renters is woefully inadequate and urgent action is required to help to protect renters from being evicted and discriminated against;

The Council notes and welcomes the campaigns by the Citizens' Advice Bureau, Acorn and Shelter which call upon landlords not to evict tenants for the duration of the pandemic, and calls for;

- 1) Officers to actively contact landlords, letting agencies and housing providers to request that they;
  - do not evict tenants for the duration of the pandemic;
  - work with the council, tenants' unions and representatives to find alternative solutions to eviction;
  - desist from discriminatory practices that act as barriers to benefit claimants such as 'no DSS' policies, requiring 6-months rent in advance, homeowner guarantors and prohibitive terms and conditions;
- 2) The Council further asks the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government urging;
  - 1) The ban on evictions be extended for at least 6 months;
  - 2) The exemption to this ban which allows for eviction due to rent debt accrued during the past 6 months be removed;
  - 3) The introduction of a grant to help with Covid-related rent debt;
  - 4) The introduction of enforcement measures to prevent unlawful discrimination against benefit claimants by landlords and letting agents.

Proposed by: Cllr Williams

Seconded by: Cllr Osborne

**Supporting information:**

Shelter:

[https://england.shelter.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/1581687/Stop\\_DSS\\_Discrimination\\_-\\_Ending\\_prejudice\\_against\\_renters\\_on\\_housing\\_benefit.pdf](https://england.shelter.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1581687/Stop_DSS_Discrimination_-_Ending_prejudice_against_renters_on_housing_benefit.pdf)

[https://england.shelter.org.uk/support\\_us/campaigns/dss](https://england.shelter.org.uk/support_us/campaigns/dss)

Citizens' Advice Bureau – 'Increasing security for renters in Brighton & Hove':

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nPnQTSYJhwro8H41iSdQvLMIOIjvtjOM/view?fbclid=IwAR1UwdbfwQKOIjPlPtk3e7WkArosFiSVIFZ2Scvtts5rpl8ZpjHFINZAbuU>



**NOTICE OF MOTION  
LABOUR GROUP****SAVE THE UNION LEARNING FUND**

This Council notes with concern the letter received by the TUC in October from the Department for Education, outlining Ministers' decision to end the Union Learning Fund (ULF) from March 2021, and;

This Council recognises the excellent results that have been achieved by the Union Learning Fund;

- 68% of learners with no previous qualifications gained a qualification;
- 68% of employers say unions are particularly effective at inspiring reluctant learners to engage in training and development;
- 70% of learners would not have taken part in learning without union support;
- Every £1 invested in the Union Learning Fund generated a total economic return of £12.24;

This Council further requests the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education, outlining this Council's support for the work of the Union Learning Fund, and urging;

- The Government to continue investing in the Union Learning Fund.

Proposed by: Cllr Childs

Seconded by: Cllr Grimshaw

**Supporting information:**

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/campaigns/dont-let-government-cut-union-learning>

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/future-union-learning-fund>

Unionlearn's main functions are to support unions to:

- Become effective learning organisations and broker learning opportunities for their members.
- Improve union engagement with and influence on learning and skills policy.
- Engage effectively with employers, employees and providers to help support the most disadvantaged learners in the labour market; focusing on supporting maths and English learners and the take-up of high quality apprenticeships and traineeships that will contribute to the Government's commitment to support the delivery of 3 million apprenticeship starts by 2020, as well as promoting the Apprenticeship Levy and new employer-led apprenticeship standards.
- Engage with employers to support them in developing new apprenticeship standards to replace frameworks.
- Provide support and advice to apprentices and trainees and help resolve any issues.
- Engage effectively with employers and other stakeholders to support the learning and skills developments required to tackle poverty and disadvantage and promote employment and the growth of the economy.
- Engage effectively with employers to develop learning and skills strategies that address both organisational and individual skills needs.
- Evaluate and provide an evidence base for the unique contribution that unions make to improving economic and social mobility through learning and skills.



**NOTICE OF MOTION  
CONSERVATIVE GROUP****BONE MARROW, STEM CELL AND ORGAN DONATION**

This Council:

1. Requests officers to take the necessary steps to allow staff to take time off work for bone marrow, stem cell or organ donation without having to use annual leave;
2. Commends the huge personal sacrifices that residents undergo to save the lives of others and sets out to assist in promoting that endeavour; and
3. Requests officers to put in place a communication campaign to all staff and residents of the city encouraging them to become bone Marrow Donors through the Anthony Nolan Charity and blood donors.

Proposed by: Cllr Miller

Seconded by: Cllr McNair

**Supporting information:**



**NOTICE OF MOTION  
CONSERVATIVE GROUP****VALUE FOR MONEY SAVINGS**

This Council:

1. Notes that the Administration is responsible for a budget of hundreds of millions of pounds each year;
2. Notes numerous recent examples of taxpayers' money being wasted as listed in Supporting Information below;
3. Requests that the Council initiates a 'value for money' programme examining back-office savings, further savings under a Workstyles programme 2 and how further similar financial occurrences can be avoided, with a report being sent to Policy & Resources Committee within 6 months to outline the results of this; and
4. Requests that officers provide the estimated costs in this report to Policy & Resources Committee, if necessary through going out to tender, of removing every piece of graffiti from public and private land within the city boundary; and this to be a recommendation of spend from the savings outlined in (3).

Proposed by: Cllr Bagaeen

Seconded by: Cllr Miller

**Supporting information:**

- £10 million on the ideological council decision to 'insource' the city's housing repair service, currently subject to ongoing industrial action.
- £1 million on the former administration's meddling with the City's Home to School Transport policy on similar ideological grounds - which resulted in the collapse of a service for disabled children to get to school.
- £3 million overspend at City Clean in the two years to the end of March 2020, with Auditors saying that they had not been able to count all the costs of the problems with the council service.
- £800,000 for the 8 months measures resulting from the former and current administrations controversial decision to close Madeira Drive and implement the A259 Cycle Lane were in place, money which would usually go towards concessionary bus passes for the disabled and over-65s as well as subsidising bus routes.
- £3.3 million administrative error impacting local schools – the council has said that it passes 43% of the costs of this error onto schools and local taxpayers will pick up the rest of the bill.
- £1,200 a day for 8 months on a temporary housing director employed by the Council;





**NOTICE OF MOTION  
GREEN GROUP AND LABOUR GROUP**

**COP 26 & WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Council notes that this year the UK is hosting COP26, a key forum focusing on climate change and actions that will affect the wellbeing of future generations.

Council also notes the progress of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill, following the adoption of a similar Bill in Wales, that confers a statutory duty on councils in Wales to consider how decisions will impact upon wellbeing now and into the future

Council therefore resolves to:

- express its support for a Wellbeing For Future Generations Act and associated impact locally, that would require public bodies to consider how decisions made now affect future needs, and tackle persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change;
- further to the government's 10 point Environment Plan, to ask the Chief Executive to write to government to request that local councils are given the funding and powers needed to take action on the wellbeing of future generations, by implementing climate and ecological emergency action by 2030, further to the meeting of COP 26 in the UK this year.

And further, calls on Policy & Resources Committee to address the wellbeing of future generations in our city, through:

- Agreeing to commission a report to review options for how council can ensure, through cross-party and city-wide collaboration, that the impact of decisions on future generations are adequately understood, risk assessed and analysed;
- that as part of this work, councillors agree to review, through the annual KPI report and other processes, a yearly appraisal of long-term economic, social, environmental and cultural trends, and to use these trends to publish additional 'future generations' impact assessments' in council reports for decision;

Proposed by: Cllr Phillips

Seconded by: Cllr Platts



**NOTICE OF MOTION  
GREEN GROUP AND LABOUR GROUP****ROAD DANGER REDUCTION**

This council notes that the Government looks set to incorporate a 'hierarchy of road users' into the Highway Code, with cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders defined as our most vulnerable road users.<sup>1</sup> This acknowledges the vehicles with the greatest potential to cause harm to other road users.

We call upon the council to:

- sign up to the Road Danger Reduction Forum Charter<sup>2</sup>, which looks at ways to make roads safer for all road users
- work with Sussex Police on ways to keep our most vulnerable residents safe on our roads

Update the city's road safety strategy through:

- bringing to the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee an updated safety strategy including road danger reduction measures such as:
  - creating an environment, using positive incentives, that supports the use of active travel methods and explores options for future financial subsidies for active travel where finance allows;
  - measuring danger on our roads through metrics other than just a reduction in casualty numbers, with a view to a proactive approach that does not require incidents to occur before action is taken
  - increasing the number of pedestrian crossings by schools and parks
  - looking to expand the number of school road closure orders
  - expanding interventions designed to cut drivers' speed, such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

Proposed by: Cllr Hills

Seconded by: Cllr Wilkinson

**Supporting Information:**

<sup>1</sup>[Review of The Highway Code to improve road safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Charter | Road Danger Reduction Forum \(rdrf.org.uk\)](#)

[More than 100 killed on Brighton and Hove's roads last year | The Argus](#)

[PACTS-What-kills-most-on-the-roads-Report-15.0.pdf;](#)  
[Lambeth Road Danger Reduction Strategy - Draft](#)



**NOTICE OF MOTION  
JOINT GREEN, LABOUR AND CONSERVATIVE GROUPS**

**TRANS INCLUSION**

This council notes that:

- Brighton & Hove has seen rising levels of hate crime towards transgender people by 43%.
- the recent High Court judgment on transgender young people's access to healthcare pathways has caused great uncertainty and anxiety for many transgender children, young people and their families in our city and across the UK.

This council believes:

- that all people should feel safe in our city, be treated with compassion and deserve equality.
- all people should be treated as equals, regardless of their gender identity
- the gender identities of cisgender, transgender and non-binary people alike are all equally valid.
- Trans men are men. Trans women are women. Non-binary identities exist and are valid.

Further that this council reaffirms its commitment to:

- Working towards equality and a safer city for transgender people.
- Working to ensure inclusive practices are implemented across the council in order that all people feel welcome and valued.

Proposed by: Cllr Powell

Seconded by: Cllr Grimshaw  
Cllr Simson

**Supporting information:**

1. <https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2019/07/01/trans-hate-crimes-and-incidents-soar-43-per-cent-in-brighton-and-hove/>



**NOTICE OF MOTION  
GREEN GROUP****SUPPORT FOR EXCLUDED UK AND THOSE EXCLUDED FROM COVID  
SUPPORT SCHEMES IN THE CITY**

This council notes that three million people across the UK have missed out on Government financial support schemes set up in the pandemic ('the excluded') due to technicalities such as:

- recently changing job;
- being a director of a limited company;
- earning less than half their income through self-employment;

Council notes that campaigns such as ExcludedUK have asked that the Government close the gaps in its financial support schemes, and explore options to retroactively compensate people and businesses that were ineligible for the Government's financial support.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Support the 'Excluded UK' campaign and its efforts to support 'the excluded';
- ask all councillors to sign ExcludedUK's open letter to the Chancellor that calls for such consideration; calling on the government to address the disparities in support, to ensure that all can receive support they need at this time;
- seek the support of councillors in promoting support available from organisations focused on financial inclusion and support in the city, including by:
- Requesting that Policy and Resources Committee consider what additional practical steps the Council can offer to offer support and advice wherever possible to those affected;
- Continuing to promote the council's community hub that can assist with such matters as help with bills and mental health.

Proposed by: Cllr Osborne

Seconded by: Cllr Hugh-Jones

**Supporting information:**

- 1) ExcludedUK is a grassroots volunteer-run not-for-profit organisation working towards bringing about an end to the exclusions in the UK Government's Covid-19 financial support measures across all employment statuses, circumstances, professions and industries.
- 2) <https://www.excludeduk.org/en/newsroom/excluding-millions-is-huge-injustice>
- 3) <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/18789673.caroline-lucas-blasts-pm-3-million-excluded-self-employed/>





**NOTICE OF MOTION****NO CUTS TO UNIVERSAL CREDIT – LET FAMILIES KEEP THE £20 INCREASE**

This Council resolves to:

- Request the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor and the Prime Minister, imploring the Government to take necessary steps to ensure that the £20 increase to Universal Credit is made permanent and extended to claimants on legacy benefits; and
- To request that the Chief Executive and officers work with other local government organisations, such as the LGA to form a coalition to pressure the government to make the £20 increase to Universal Credit permanent.

Supporting Information:

- Next April the Government plan to cut the benefit level for millions of claimants by ending of the time limited increase to the basic rate of Universal Credit (and the tax credit equivalent) announced by the Chancellor on 20th March as part of his pandemic response package.
- The £20 a week boost reflected the reality that the level of benefits were not adequate to protect the swiftly increasing number of households relying on them as the crisis hit. Exactly because that increase was a very significant and welcome move to bolster low- and middle-income families living standards, its removal will be a huge loss.
- Pressing ahead would see the level of unemployment support fall to its lowest real-terms level since 1990-91, and it's lowest ever relative to average earnings. Indeed, the basic level of out-of-work support prior to the March boost was – at £73 a week (£3,800 a year) – less than half the absolute poverty line.
- The increase in benefits have had a positive effect on the lives of thousands of local claimants who are better able to pay for life's essentials such as food, clothing and utilities.
- The local economy has also benefited from the increase in benefit levels as claimants spend their money locally thereby supporting local businesses and jobs.



**NOTICE OF MOTION****ACTION TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF FIREWORKS**

The Council notes and welcomes the RSPCA campaign which calls for action to reduce the impact of fireworks on animals and vulnerable people, and;

The Council calls for;

- 1) organisers of all public firework displays within Brighton & Hove advertise them in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;
- 2) officers to actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks; and
- 3) to encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display;

The Council further asks the Chief Executive to write to the Government urging;

- 1) the introduction of legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90 decibels for those sold to the public for private displays; and
- 2) The Council also asks that any Government response is shared at a future Council meeting.

**Supporting Information:**

Fireworks are used by people throughout the year to mark different events.

Whilst they can bring much enjoyment to some people, they can cause significant problems and fear for other people and animals.

Vulnerable people can become confused and disorientated by the noise.

They can be a source of fear and distress for many animals (including pets, farm livestock and wildlife).

Animals affected not only suffer psychological distress but can also cause themselves injuries, sometimes very serious ones, as they attempt to run away or hide from the noise.

<https://aaf1a18515da0e792f78-c27fdabe952dfc357fe25ebf5c8897ee.ssl.cf5.rackcdn.com/143/Motion+for+councils+on+fireworks+England+301019.pdf?v=1572433962000>



**NOTICE OF MOTION****SUPPORT UNITED NATIONS TPNW: ICAN CITIES APPEAL**

This Council notes;

- 1) That any nuclear weapon detonation by accident or intent would constitute a major humanitarian catastrophe, with consequences transcending national borders and having grave implications for the health and survival of current and future generations;
- 2) That the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons negotiated under United Nations auspices and adopted by 122 UN Member States on 7 July 2017, will gain international legal force on January 22nd 2021, 90 days after being signed and ratified by the first fifty governments;
- 3) The important security, peace-building, safety and educational roles and responsibilities of local authorities worldwide, including through 'Nuclear Free Local Authorities' (NFLA) and 'Mayors for Peace', of which BHCC is a member;
- 4) That Mayors for Peace works with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN, 2017 Nobel Peace laureate) and other partners in over a hundred countries to encourage cities to support the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;

This Council resolves;

- 1) To declare its support for the obligations and full implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
- 2) To call on the UK government to work for global peace in a world free of nuclear weapons by signing and ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and working alongside other UN Member States for its full implementation;
- 3) To inform the Prime Minister, UN Secretary-General, Mayors for Peace and International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons of the Council's adoption of this resolution.

**Supporting Information:**

Legislation based on ICAN's Cities Appeal has been adopted by Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Edinburgh, Manchester, Oxford, Sydney, Melbourne, Geneva and many other cities, as well as the State of California and the County of Renfrewshire in Scotland, as listed here: [https://cities.icanw.org/list\\_of\\_cities](https://cities.icanw.org/list_of_cities)



**NOTICE OF MOTION****POWER OF YOUTH CHARTER**

That this council:

- agrees the importance of including young people's voices in decision-making and commends the recent work on a 'youth engagement' action plan, which was created with young people themselves who worked hard on this initiative to ensure young voices have greater influence
- commends the work of young people at the forefront of the Black Lives Matter movement, the Youth Climate Strikes, and in organising the Youth Climate Assembly
- thanks Brighton and Hove Youth Council, YouthWise and Children in Care Council for their work in formally representing young people within council structures and recognises their importance
- reaffirms its prior commitment to votes at 16

This council therefore:

- agrees, subject to Children, Young People & Skills Committee approval, to sign up to the 'Power of Youth Charter', using the youth engagement report as a basis for showing how we will meet its aims
- requests the Children, Young People & Skills Committee receive a yearly report on actions taken against the Charter across the council
- commits to using our communication channels as councillors and political parties to support the work of young people, as per the charter
- calls for a report to Children, Young People & Skills Committee, no later than April 2021, that:
  - assesses the methods the Council uses to engage with young people;
  - seeks to improve our communication with young people through a collaborative process; and
  - explores how young people are consulted and their views considered in all local policy decisions that impact them.

