

Subject: Petitions
Date of Meeting: 4 May 2017
Report of: Executive Lead Officer for Strategy Governance & Law
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To receive those petitions presented to the Full Council and referred to the committee for consideration.
- 1.2 To receive any petitions to be presented or which have been submitted via the council's website or for which notice has been given directly to Democratic Services.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee responds to the petition either by noting it or writing to the petition organiser setting out the Council's views, or where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter which may give consideration to a range of options, including the following:
- taking the action requested in the petition
 - considering the petition at a council meeting
 - holding an inquiry into the matter
 - undertaking research into the matter
 - holding a public meeting
 - holding a consultation
 - holding a meeting with petitioners
 - calling a referendum

3. PETITIONS

- 3.1 Petitions for presentation:
- i) **Business Rates for The Bevy and Other Community Businesses**
Petition from Warren Carter (The Bevendean Community Pub).

'We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove Council to Review its policy regarding discretionary business rates for community businesses, to enable The Bevy - and other community businesses - to benefit from the same reductions available to charities and other not-for-profit groups.'

Further Information

'The Bevy is the only co-operative community-owned pub in Brighton and is owned via a Community Benefit Society with a statutory asset lock guaranteeing the not-for-profit status of the pub, and so meeting the criteria of section 47B of the 1988 Local Government Finance Act.

We recognise the Council faces challenging times in terms of managing its finances whilst discharging its responsibilities. We feel it need to see enterprise like the Bevy - rooted in communities, owned by them and responsive to them with legally-binding not-for-profit status - as partners in navigating this landscape, and so work with us to help us ensure that the people of the city are best protected and able to access the services traditionally provided by the Council.

The Bevy is so much more than just a pub and delivers services way beyond what pubs commonly do, including some that the council are no longer able too. Seventy different groups used the Bevy last year - from the weekly seniors lunch club, United Churches of Moulsecoomb Christmas Carols, tenants associations and scouts groups, monthly art and craft group to Little Green Pig delivering storytelling workshops to Moulsecoomb Primary pupils. Health Checks to teaching children to cook, garden shows to energy advice cafe.'

3.2 Referred petitions:

i) **Keep Our Horses in Stanmer**

Petition from Antigone Nikiteas referred from the Council meeting held on 6 April 2017 (368 signatures).

'We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove City Council to continue renting the Dovecote stable block to its current tenants to keep horses there in light of the redevelopment plans.'

Further Information

'We are appealing to the council to continue to rent the Dovecote stables, or other stable block buildings and accompanying land to its current tenants. Having horses in the village brings interest, education and engagement with animals and the outdoors to both adults and children. Park users frequently stop at the gate to admire the horses; valuable contact with such animals that many do not otherwise have access to.

Further to this the current tenants are on a pathway to being able to provide equine assisted learning to children and young people with special needs. For the last three years ourselves and our horses have been donating our own time and resources to young people with special needs, aiding their communication, calming their sensory systems, improving

challenging behaviour and providing a family experience which families otherwise find difficult to achieve. We wish to expand this to providing a community service to more children and young people as well as potentially school groups. Stanmer provides the perfect setting as it is beautiful, accessible and close to Brighton.

However, with an insecure future ahead, we cannot look to get the correct insurance and licences in place to go ahead with these plans. Please don't let the space become a dry, information only area and please don't let it fall into the hands of those purely interested in making money. Don't take the heart and soul out of Stanmer and give the residents those links to the past by keeping animals in the village as they always have been.

You cannot imagine the impact the experiences we have been able to provide are having on individuals and their families. We are constantly being asked to provide sessions for people, the need is great and we are willing. This could be an invaluable community resource to both visitors to the park and children and young people who otherwise often have very limited access to engaging and beneficial activities such as this. This is life changing to many, let's see the good work continued with a secure tenancy in Stanmer park.'

ii) **Open Night Shelters for Rough Sleepers**

Petition from John Hadman referred from the Council meeting held on 6 April 2017 (4,153 signatures).

'We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove City Council to open night shelters in Brighton and Hove as soon as it is cold and wet rather than waiting until it is below freezing.'

Further Information

Brighton has experienced a massive drop in temperatures and rough sleepers can be seen all around Brighton. The Council's decision as to when to open them is arbitrary.

Homeless people who sleep rough on Brighton's streets are at risk of poor health, theft, abuse and violence.

(Extract from the meeting of Council on 6 April 2017 attached as an appendix)

