

Brighton & Hove City Council

Special Children, Young People & Skills Committee

Agenda Item 61(b)

Subject: PAN School Consultation – Deputation referred from Public Engagement Meeting held on 16 December 2021

Date of meeting: 31 January 2022

Report of: Executive Director for Governance, People & Resources

Contact Officer: Name: Mark Wall
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Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 To receive the following deputation which was presented at and referred from the public engagement meeting held on the 16 December 2021.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Committee responds to the deputation either by noting it or where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter which may give consideration to a range of options and writes to the deputation spokesperson setting out the committee's decision(s).

3. Context and background information

3.1 To receive the following deputation along with the extract from the public engagement meeting which is detailed in appendix 1:

**Deputation concerning: School Admissions Consultation – reducing PAN at seven Primary Schools across Brighton
Spokesperson Abby Kinslow**

Brighton and Hove City Council's plan for 2020 to 2023 is titled "a fairer city, a sustainable future". In January, the Children, Young People and Skills Committee will vote on proposals to change primary school admission numbers that contradict that title. There is nothing *fair* or *sustainable* about the changes proposed.

- Attempts have been made to reduce larger schools in well-served areas and who knows how far discussions have got with the 40% of schools included in the figures over which the Council has no jurisdiction. But without any success thus far, the Council has now turned to a short-sighted solution – shaving small amounts from smaller schools around the edge of the city where other walkable options do not exist and the residents are less likely, or less able, to object.

- This is not a healthy, long-term strategy for our city... I will briefly suggest that there could be some alternatives.
- If approved, this proposal will increase the attainment gap and fracture local communities – both of which are specifically mentioned as targets for investment in the Council’s plan for the city.
- The larger and more central schools have to be persuasively re-challenged to play their part otherwise many who want to live locally and sustainably soon won’t have a school choice within walking distance at all.
- Pupils will be forced to travel to larger schools further from home because the ones that serve their local communities will have been cut to death, which will continue to exacerbate the problem for years to come.
- Making Brighton Carbon Neutral by 2030 will become impossible.
- Was an Equalities Impact Assessment done in relation to these proposals? As ever, those disproportionately affected by this decision would be those most in need. As an example, Carden’s intake is more diverse than Brighton’s overall population in terms of ethnicity and language.
- Whitehawk, Moulsecoomb and Hollingbury are named in the council’s report as the three areas of highest concentration of deprivation. The first two now have Academy schools. In Hollingbury, Carden remains part of the LA’s family of schools but we feel let down by that family when this proposal is not supported by the Council’s own data, which has not been well applied.
- We would rather support this Council in challenging the Government and the Schools’ Adjudicator head on, than take this reduction without objection.
- This is not a solution that works for Brighton as a whole. The Council’s own priorities are being trampled on. We would urge the Council to ask the CYPs Committee to delay this decision, examine wider data, seek further counsel, and find another way. The path of least resistance is not an acceptable way to serve Brighton and Hove.

Supporting information

Supporting data is available on the Council’s website - the Planning Areas Map, City Plan, the PAN proposals with the LA’s reasoning, the preference and admissions data for all primary schools in the area over the past 6 years, and the Pupil Forecast spreadsheets made from GP registration data.

Supported by:

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|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Esther Garibay | 2. Craig Watters |
| 3. Emma Watters | 4. Reyna Kothari |
| 5. Nicola Alexander Claber | 6. C. Alexander Claber |
| 7. Shirley Marsh | 8. Laura Bissonnet |
| 9. Adam Brain | |

Ward affected: All

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MEETING

4.30pm 16 DECEMBER 2021

VIRTUAL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Robins (Chair), Allcock, Appich, Atkinson, Bagaeen, Barnett, Brennan, Brown, Childs, Clare, Davis, Deane, Druitt, Evans, Gibson, Hamilton, Heley, Hills, Janio, John, Knight, Mac Cafferty, McNair, Meadows, Mears, Nemeth, Nield, Osborne, Peltzer Dunn, Pissaridou, Powell, O'Quinn, Shanks, Simson, C Theobald, Wilkinson and Williams.

4. DEPUTATIONS

4.1 The Mayor reported that four deputations had been received from members of the public and that he would invite the spokesperson to introduce their deputation and then the relevant Chair to respond. He noted that 15 minutes were set aside for the consideration of deputations.

4.6 The Mayor invited Abby Kinslow as the spokesperson for the deputation to join and address the meeting; noting that the deputation related to the proposed changes to school admission numbers across the city and in particular to Carden Nursery and Primary School.

4.7 Abby Kinslow thanked the Mayor and spoke on the deputation relating to the proposed changes to admission numbers for Carden Nursery and Primary School and how this would impact the school and local community.

4.8 Councillor Clare thanked Ms Kinslow for presenting the deputation and stated that she wanted to acknowledge that she understood why you feel this way and to acknowledge that no one wants to be in this position. Yet the context is this, the city is facing a crisis, there are too many school places for the number of children in the city. The falling birth rate was a national trend and as an Admissions Authority, the council was faced with having to make some extremely difficult decisions regarding school admission numbers. Whatever way we propose changes, decisions were likely to upset some school communities.

This evening I will be giving a number of responses on this topic and I am doing so as chair of the committee. But I want to be clear the consultation is still on-going, and my mind is not made up.

4.9 The Mayor thanked Ms Kinslow for joining the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. He explained that the points had been noted and the deputation would be referred to the Children, Young People & Skills 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.

