

Brighton & Hove City Council

Full Council

Agenda Item 23

Subject: Take action to tackle gender inequality: from period poverty to safety, health and education

Date of meeting: 21 July 2022

Proposer: Councillor Moonan
Seconder: Councillor Appich

Ward(s) affected: All

Notice of Motion

Labour Group

Council notes:

- The US Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v Wade
- Systematic and institutional misogyny meaning women being failed in areas ranging from justice to health
- Brighton & Hove has been ranked the worst city in the country for period poverty, with almost HALF of women and girls unable to afford basic sanitary protection
- Charities are still supporting red boxes in schools and food banks with sanitary products
- NHS reports over a THIRD of women in Brighton & Hove missed smear tests and critical cervical screenings last year
- Government intervention needed, but there are real actions we can take to tackle period poverty, female health inequalities, and to improve safety and education

Therefore, resolves to:

- 1) Request Policy & Resources Committee to ask officers to bring forward a report, in consultation with female residents and women's organisations in the city, that outlines a new Gender Equality Strategy, aimed at tackling gender inequality in the city
- 2) Further requests P&R to ask officers to include in the report proposals to work in partnership to create and support a network for women in the city, and to focus on four key areas;
 - Poverty (to consider distributing free sanitary products at community centres and youth clubs)
 - Health (including a public health awareness campaign to improve cervical screening rates)
 - Safety (including improvements to support services for victims of VAWG, and a Night Time Safety Charter and a consultation to hear from women and girls on improving street safety)

- Education (including rolling out anti-misogyny and gender equality training in schools)

Supporting Information:

- Despite 1,739 rapes being reported in Sussex last year, only 50 trials took place and only 22 men were convicted
- 690 women in the UK die from cervical cancer every year
- 46% of women and girls unable to afford basic sanitary protection in Brighton & Hove
- Charities are still supporting red boxes in schools and food banks with sanitary products
- Abortion still illegal in Northern Ireland, and issues with provision in the rest of the UK

<https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2022/06/29/women-reported-1700-rapes-last-year-but-just-22-men-were-convicted/>

<https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/20238423.period-poverty-at-worst-brighton-hove-study-reveals/>

<https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/20237411.third-brighton-women-miss-smear-tests-nhs-data-reveals/>