

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 15 DECEMBER 2022

HOVE TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Deane (Chair), O'Quinn (Deputy Chair), Allcock, Appich, Bagaen, Barnett, Bell, Brown, Childs, Allbrooke, Davis, Druitt, Ebel, Evans, Fishleigh, Fowler, Gibson, Grimshaw, Hills, Hugh-Jones, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Meadows, Mac Cafferty, McNair, Moonan, Nemeth, Osborne, Pissaridou, Powell, Robins, Shanks, Simson, C Theobald, West, Williams and Yates

PART ONE

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 48.1 Councillor Yates declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Item 59 & 61 as he was employed by University Hospital Sussex and his partner was employed by Sanctuary Housing as a Mental Health project worker and was an NHS student nurse.
- 48.2 Councillor Meadows declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as in Item 59 & 61 as a member of University Hospital Sussex.
- 48.3 Councillor Grimshaw, Knight, Osborne, Pissaridou, Williams declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as a member of ACORN union.
- 48.4 No other declarations of interests in matters appearing on the agenda were made.

49 MINUTES

- 49.1 The minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on 20 October 2022 were approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

50 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

- 50.1 Welcome to the meeting of Brighton & Hove City Council.

I would like to inform those present that this meeting is being webcast live to the internet and will be capable of repeated viewing.

I am also aware that some members of the public with items on the agenda will be joining the meeting virtually for their item. Where this is the case, you are asked to

please ensure that you have switched on your microphone and camera before speaking so that you can be heard and seen.

To those attending the meeting in person, you are asked to respect the agreement of full Council in July that anyone entering the venue wears a mask, although this can be removed when speaking. Spare masks are available if required. I would ask that Members do stand when speaking as this makes it easier to be heard. I would remind all Members that all contributions to the meeting are directed to me as Chair of the meeting.

Can I remind everyone that the use of Mobile Communication Devices in the chamber is allowed as long as they remain in silent mode.

Anyone present is able to film, photograph or take sound recordings of today's meeting provided it is done in a way that does not interfere with the proceedings and that flash photography is not used.

Before we proceed further, I note that there was a by-election in Wish Ward on 8th December 2022. I would like to thank the Electoral Services Team for running a smooth election and all those that supported the process. I would now like to ask Cllr Allcock as Leader for the Labour Group to introduce the new Member to the Council.

Cllr Allcock introduced Cllr Sankey. Cllr Sankey entered the Chamber upon introduction and took her seat.

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Sankey to Brighton & Hove City Council.

51 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS.

- 51.1 The Mayor stated that she had been notified of 2 petitions to be presented and invited the submission of petitions from councillors and members of the public. She 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.
- 51.2 Angela Cox presented a petition signed by residents concerning Falmer Pond Preservation.
- 51.3 Councillor Simson presented a petition signed by residents concerning two new pedestrian crossings in Woodingdean.
- 51.4 The Mayor noted and thanked the petitioners for presenting their petitions and confirmed that they would be referred to the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee for consideration.

52 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

- 52.1 The Mayor reported that 8 written questions had been received from members of the public and invited Theresa Ross to come forward and address the council.

- 52.2 Theresa Ross asked the following question; Is it possible to convert the tennis courts at East Brighton into paddle courts? The starting costs for a basic paddle court are varied but some quotes suggest at the basic level £15,000. Paddle tennis is the fastest growing sport in the world and second most popular sport to football. The UK has only just woken up to it. Currently there is one court in Withdean, I am aware that Hove has planned some courts. East Brighton park would be an ideal spot as there are tennis courts already there, and parking also. More importantly, it would offer a great new sport to the local area.
- 52.3 Councillor Hills replied; Thank you very much for your question. We agree that there is an exciting potential to develop paddle tennis in the city, as you state in your question, we're taking the opportunity to introduce four paddle tennis courts as part of the exciting and recently approved plans for the Kingsway to the Sea project at the West of Hove seafront. There is also a pop-up paddle tennis court in Withdean Sports Complex and the planning application has recently been submitted for an enclosed three court facility. It is our intention to see how these two sites progress and how much demand there is across the city before considering other sites as it should be acknowledged that there is very high demand for tennis in the city. As you may be aware, Local Authorities around the country are in extremely difficult financial positions; in Brighton and Hove we have had to make over one hundred million pounds worth of cuts since the Conservative Government took charge in 2010. This, along with record high inflation and increased demand on our services means unfortunately we are not able to make all the changes we might like to at this stage. Thank you.
- 52.4 Theresa Ross asked the following supplementary question; If it's just funding that's the problem, I was wondering would it be possible to access money from the local Roedean area which provides money for the community infrastructure project and whether you have plans to allow people on the East side of Brighton to access courts easily.
- 52.5 Councillor Hills replied: Would you be able to put that question in writing and send it off to us and I'll get back to you on that?
- 52.6 The Mayor thanked Theresa Ross for her questions and invited Dilys Brown to come forward and address the council.
- 52.7 Dilys Brown asked the following question: I and eight other residents live in Kipling Court, Rottingdean, directly opposite the new flats under construction in St Aubyns field. I understand the need for new housing, what I don't understand is why developers were allowed to build the flats fifteen metres from our homes with all future residents able to look directly into our bedrooms and living rooms. Planning Officials have said this loss of our privacy is acceptable, but they have never been inside our homes. Is there anything the Council can do to force the developer to install frosted glass windows?
- 52.8 Councillor Littman replied; Thank you for your question, Miss Brown. I do understand the issue, however when the application was considered at planning committee in October 2018, it was noted that the 15 metres is from the front of Kipling Court to the front of the new development across the road. It was considered that that's equivalent to any other two buildings on opposite sides of a road anywhere in Rottingdean which is why it was considered not to be a loss of privacy. I remember when the application came to us, there were a number of objections including several on that aspect and I

remember that this led us to a careful consideration of various aspects of the officer's report by the members of the Planning Committee. Planning conditions, which is what would be required by law, they have to pass the test of being both necessary and reasonable, for the reasons that I've just given above it wasn't considered that the condition to install to install obscured glass would pass that legal test, so it was not included in the planning condition.

- 52.9 Dilys Brown asked the following supplementary question; I would just like to ask the Council then, if you can't do anything, have you any other suggestions to help with the lack of privacy that we will now, and forever, be experiencing as all eight residents have now got to go to the expense of installing blinds in all windows to compensate for this.
- 52.10 Councillor Littman replied; Thank you, I do sympathise and all I can suggest is, as I say the Council has not got the legal right to do anything about it, what I would then suggest is when the flats are occupied, to talk to the new residents to see if an agreement can be reached between you and them. If you still consider, once they're built and occupied, that it's still a privacy issue.
- 52.11 The Mayor thanked Dilys Brown for their questions and invited Rob Shepherd to come forward and address the council.
- 52.12 Rob Shepherd asked the following question; Your plan to reduce transport carbon by 4% each year failed horribly, averaging just 1.2%. At that rate Transport alone, will greatly exceed our 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme's total carbon target. We can only guess how much greater the total failure will be. So, first, what are the 3 biggest new things you are doing to improve on previous Transport plans? Secondly, what are the percentage annual carbon savings you expect each of these 3 things to achieve. Finally what is your revised annual target for reducing Transport Carbon? Thank you.
- 52.13 Cllr Davis replied; Thank you for your question, Rob. I know that you have shown a significant level of interest in the work and progress on carbon reduction through the regular correspondence that you have sent to councillors and officers over the years.

The following written response was provided:

We know that meeting the 2030 target is a big challenge for the city, but our plan and programme of works is significant. We will report progress on the Carbon Neutral Programme annually – the first report was considered by committee earlier this year. Progress will vary year on year but we will do what we can within the budgets and the staff capacity that are available to us.

The strategic work that we have done so far on developing a new Transport Plan for the city shows the direction we want to take. The three principles that underpin our approach are:-

- reducing the need to travel in order to reduce the overall number and/or length of vehicle movements in the city;
- shifting as many journeys as possible to sustainable and active travel alternatives; and
- increasing the number of cleaner vehicles that are used for essential journeys.

Achieving these outcomes will involve the delivery of a number of measures. Three examples of this include:-

- Bus travel - which plays an incredibly important role in the city, and the network remains one of the best in the country. Our Bus Service Improvement Plan has been developed through continued, close working with bus operators. It has recently helped us secure nearly £30 million of investment from the government to improve reliability, journey times and increase passenger numbers. This will provide a significant boost to bus services across the city and involve continuing and new actions, delivered jointly with our partners and stakeholders, such as reallocating and redesigning roadspace, investing in cleaner fleets and having lower and more affordable fares.
- Our fantastic BikeShare scheme is being improved and expanded. When it is relaunched, at least 60% of the new fleet of 780 bikes will be electric. There will be more bike docking stations around the city to make the scheme truly city wide and a range of tariff options for users, and a new sponsor partnership offer.
- Our exciting electric vehicle charging point strategy has been going from strength to strength for local people and visitors, helping to increase the uptake of electric vehicles and reduce emissions. We are continuing to look at new ways and new locations to expand this further, including rapid charging hubs. Our own vehicle fleet is being transformed too, with new investment in vehicles and facilities.

The wider programme of transport initiatives and investment will inform and enable people to make different decisions about choosing how, when (and if) they need to travel, and therefore contribute towards reducing carbon emissions. Reducing vehicle use and emissions will occur through behaviour change in the home, the workplace and within local communities. The annual report also highlights that carbon reduction will come from upgrading our street lighting stock, and using different materials and new processes for maintenance and construction.

Working with our partners who can offer the alternatives that most people can use – bus and train operators, taxi companies, car club operators and bikeshare and e:cargo bike providers - is also essential. Brighton & Hove is a compact city and longer many journeys start or finish outside it, and can be a greater challenge as they can involve factors outside of our direct influence. The actions of our neighbouring local authorities and their residents and businesses will therefore also have an effect on transport conditions and the level of emissions.

Tackling vehicle journeys of all lengths is important, and can contribute to a number of the council's key objectives in addition to carbon reduction. Transferring shorter journeys to active travel and public transport is a healthier alternative, and reduces the higher levels of emissions that can occur when engines are not running efficiently and therefore affect air quality. Less vehicles on our roads also creates a safer environment for people to move about or socialise.

To reach the 2030 target, we will continue to look at the various pathways that can be taken to deliver reductions in carbon emissions. However, the annual report acknowledges that it is difficult to quantify reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and the relationship between transport measures use and travel choices is not a simple one as there are many different factors involved. Many authorities are wrestling with this and we are still awaiting the publication of guidance from the Government that was expected much earlier in the year. I am pleased that work is now also taking place at a

regional level to help support local authorities and provide a better understanding of the opportunities and options that can maximise carbon reductions. This will aid our understanding and enable us to focus our resources, and aim to meet the target.

In overall terms, we know that the 2030 carbon neutral target is ambitious, and recognise that offsetting carbon emissions is also likely to be necessary to meet it. To minimise the need for this, cutting carbon from transport emissions across the city will require the continued engagement and participation of residents, communities, businesses and organisations, supported and enabled by the work of the council.

Robert Shepherd asked the following supplementary question; Yes, could I just ask my supplementary question anyway though? In November, you reported just a 9.5% reduction in annual carbon, falling well short of the 12.7% annual rate needed to be carbon neutral in 2030, and by an amount close to the usual transport shortfall. Our annual target now has to be raised to be even more ambitious. How much of 2021's failure was due to transport carbon reductions not living up to expectations, and what changes are you making to the 2030 programme to ensure it achieves the extra annual carbon reductions that are now essential to its success?

52.14 Councillor Davis replied;: Across the city as a whole, greenhouse gas emissions in 2021 are expected to be 9.5% lower than the year before. This is a much bigger drop than ever achieved before. Transport emissions across this city were estimated to fall back 18% between 2019 and 2020 according to Government statistics. This fall was during the Covid period when commuting and leisure travel both obviously fell drastically. As we recover gradually from the lockdown era, some transport emissions will bounce back as some things we learned then will continue, such as the increase in home-working which reduces regular commuting. Greenhouse gas emissions from transport are some of the most difficult to cut, it relies on universal and costly electrification of vehicles as well as widespread behavioural change towards active travel and public transport amongst our residents. The Council is continually seeking best practise to improve our understanding of greenhouse gas emissions across the city and we are commissioning the decarbonisation pathway study which will identify the scale of the challenge and scenarios for change and action towards our 2030 goal. We are also leading by example and showing what can be done in our own fleet, our refuse vehicles, maintenance vans, cars and parts equipment are all planned to become zero carbon by 2030. By setting this example we hope others will follow on. Thank you Rob for being so understanding with your original question and Merry Christmas.

52.15 The Mayor thanked Rob Shephard for their questions and invited Gary Thomas to come forward and address the council.

52.16 Gary Thomas asked the following question: I run the Mooch hair salon on New Road. Life is a struggle for small independent businesses like mine. At the end of November, we received a £110 fine for putting our rubbish out for its weekly collection from a private waste company at 5:24pm instead of 6pm, which is allowed, because we had no late appointments and wanted to close early. The rubbish was in large canvas bags tied to our drainpipe and sealed against the seagulls and foxes. They are neat and tidy and do not obstruct access. Please would you considering amending the times when rubbish can be put out in the North Laine to help those traders who open and close early, like ourselves. I think the time between is 9 until 6 at the moment we're not allowed to put

rubbish out and I think most of the North Laine traders we open at 10 or sometimes close a little early due to business, so my question would be would you consider changing those times by an hour?

- 52.17 Councillor Davis replied; Thank you for your question, Gary. Obviously I am the Councillor least likely to be visiting the hairdressers any time soon, but I would like to say that we are extremely grateful for all of our local businesses and what they offer to this city. Local businesses throughout this city make Brighton and Hove the special place that it is. When the time branding of commercial waste collection was brought in, the City Council wrote to all businesses to advise them and to provide guidance. As a result of the new time branding, the city looks a lot better and importantly the accessibility on public highways has improved significantly. Despite all of this, I can completely appreciate that receiving a fixed penalty notice may seem frustrating during these difficult times. We recognise that the current time branding zones may not be convenient, and I will pass your feedback on to officers to consider whether the current time branding should be reviewed. We highly recommend that you contact your waste management company to see if an earlier collection is possible during opening times.
- 52.18 Gary Thomas asked the following supplementary question; How many businesses in the North Laine would have to come forward to this committee to ask the hours to change before you agree? Also, I read on your website that the council is calling on the Government to help small businesses, and yet I'm here as a small business in the city asking for help on something that you can change but seem to be refusing?
- 52.19 Councillor Davis replied; Thanks Gary, I appreciate your predicament and I think what would probably be best, as you mentioned, if you've got contact with other businesses that you organise them and you and I have a meeting in the new year where we can sit down with officers and hopefully have a look at what's happened here. Is that acceptable
- 52.20 The Mayor thanked Gary Thomas for their questions and invited Alex Partridge to come forward and address the council.
- 52.21 Question from Alex Partridge: Residents of Roedean Road are extremely concerned for the safety of pedestrians walking up and down the road. There is a virtual pavement but this is woefully inadequate. Are there any plans to install a traditional pavement or similar?
- 52.22 Councillor Hills replied; Thank you very much for your question, Alex. I agree that the pedestrian route along Roedean Road would really benefit from some improvement. Roedean Road has been identified as a local link needing improvement in our local cycling and walking infrastructure plan that the council adopted earlier this year. This provides a plan for walking and cycling improvement across the city, it is our intention that more detailed proposals for each route will be developed in future as funding becomes available. You may have heard the answer to my earlier question when I referenced the extreme levels of cuts forced on Brighton & Hove City Council, since 2010 we've had to make huge amounts of savings which means we have to limit our level of ambition, however, a priority for this Green administration is to improve infrastructure for people on foot and using wheeled mobility devices and as such I know our officers will be looking for all opportunities to find this funding.

- 52.23 Alex Partridge asked the following supplementary question; There's been considerable development on Roedean Road, there's been five new family homes at least in the last 12 months with most of those on the brow of the hill where traffic seems to fly by at 40-50 miles an hour. Are there any plans in the interim to improve the visibility of speed limit signs? The road has a 30 miles an hour speed limit but cars go considerably faster where there's been five new family homes built on the brow of the hill where they tend to go the fastest. Are we going to wait until somebody dies before change is made?
- 52.24 Councillor Hills replied; Thank you, obviously this is not something that we want. We don't want cars to be speeding we like all drivers to adhere to speed limits because obviously that's why they're there; to keep people safe. I think the best thing to do is if we can have a conversation to see if signage could be put in place or something could be put there to improve the situation.
- 52.25 The Mayor thanked Alex Partridge for their questions and invited Councillor Fishleigh to come forward and address the council.
- 52.26 Question from Councillor Fishleigh on behalf of Derek Wright; Will the council look into rapidly extending the free Wi-Fi provision to the Eastern seafront along Madeira Drive and the Lower Promenade to help improve security and serve visitors to the existing, new and future businesses and outdoor activities at Black Rock?
- 52.27 Councillor Hills replied; It's an interesting question, there are no current plans to extend Wi-Fi beyond it's current offer. We have found that most of our residents, businesses and visitors use their own mobile data, but it is an interesting suggestion and I have shared it with officers.
- 52.28 Councillor Fishleigh asked the following supplementary question on behalf of Derek Wright; When will the new street lighting on Madeira Drive East be installed?
- 52.29 Councillor Hills replied; This question is on a slightly different topic the supplementary question should follow the original This is a separate question.
- 52.30 The Mayor thanked Councillor Fishleigh for their questions and invited Daniel Harris to come forward and address the council.
- 52.31 Question from Daniel Harris on behalf of Jo Colwell: At what stage does the council provide those suffering from a section 21 no fault eviction and who are in need of housing advice and/or support a homeless prevention officer. They are normally assigned to prevent homelessness and or to provide a route to suitable housing to these vulnerable people?
- 52.32 Councillor Gibson replied; Thank you for your question, Daniel. If someone is served with a valid section 21 notice they are threatened with homelessness at that point and would be assigned a Homeless Prevention Officer as soon as they approached the council. The council would then work with that person to prevent their homelessness. That might mean negotiating with the landlord to help them remain or assisting in finding alternative private rental accommodation, and I would add that we're both aware that

this hasn't always happened as it should and when it doesn't happen, without going into individual cases, we need to learn from that.

- 52.33 Daniel Harris asked the following supplementary question on behalf of Jo Colwell: Yes I do indeed, this is Jo's. This is in relation to my relative who was provided a possession order back in June, that's 188 days ago, he went to the council 187 days ago in his mobility scooter – he is 71 years old – he was sent away to PHC Sussex who basically sat on it. He was due to be evicted this morning, however, at the last minute due to our intervention this was delayed, landlord has been compensated, legal fees paid. Why are, on our application of the London Borough of Lambeth 2022, which focuses on homelessness assessments and personal housing plans, the judge said the personal housing plan was unlawful because it was based upon a flawed and unlawful housing needs assessment. What Jo said is her relative didn't even get a personal housing plan 188 days ago and we've still never seen one. This is unlawful. Will Rachel Sharpe meet with me to discuss ways to avoid this for others in the future?
- 52.34 Councillor Gibson replied; As you can imagine I can't answer in terms of individual details of a case. I think I did suggest that we always need to learn when the response is not as good as we would like it to be, and I am aware of this case and I'm aware that with some last-minute work that a stay of execution has been negotiated with the landlord in question. We now have, I think it's 12 weeks to sort things out, so we need to thank officers for turning that around and thank you and other advocates for pushing on that and we also need to learn from some of the delays in the response. Thank you.
- 52.35 Question from Daniel Harris: Have there been any reports/data on the discretionary house and social fund and how that's been allocated and any breakdown or any stats? I would really appreciate some, as I am getting a lot of people experiencing homelessness and hardship claiming they are being placed into accommodations with nothing, literally nothing, we also have people in temporary accommodation spending hundreds of pounds each week on energy bills in poorly insulated homes.
- 52.36 Response from Councillor Gibson replied; Thank you, Daniel, for your question and thank you for raising the concerns which we would like to clearly look into further and understand whether or not there is a potential issue for people placed in accommodation, in particular ensuring people are provided with the right advice and signposted to available support. The Housing Service provides a level of assistance to all those moving into temporary accommodation including, for instance, provision of white goods and carpets, while energy costs are charged at the standard rate. With respect to the local discretionary fund (LDSF), we do capture a wide range of statistics regarding awards issued which would be difficult to share within a full written answer, however in summary, we can report that between April and November 2022, 3714 awards have been made. Awards are generally made under three categories known as Emergencies, Returns and Prevents. Emergencies are households in immediate food and/or fuel distress and these claims are always prioritised. The award is designed to provide around three weeks assistance. Returns are to help households move from homelessness or return from hospital or other settings into accommodation. Prevent cases are to provide people with replacement items to help them stay in their home or tenancy. The average award for Emergencies is £310 for single households and £436 for multiple or family households. The average award for Return cases is £217 per household and Prevent cases are £296 per household. Of the 3714 cases up to

November, 58% were for Emergencies, 27% were Returns cases and 15% were Prevent cases. Of the 3714 cases up to November, 47% were in council housing, 20% in private rented accommodation and 16% in housing associations with 3% living with friends or family and 14% in other types of accommodation or tenancies. I hope that provides some useful information to your enquiry, Daniel.

- 52.37 Daniel Harris asked the following supplementary question; The council said in Brighton and Hove news that we do everything to support people threatened with homelessness to find suitable accommodation. You said that you negotiate with landlords to try and extend tenancies and give residents the opportunity to find alternative accommodation and you use the homeless prevention fund for that when you've got 7 Million pounds for that, you're paying private landlords off who are victimising tenants. Can you divert more funds into the service to make sure that people in situ and hardship get the money and not landlords? Thank you.
- 52.38 Councillor Gibson replied; I completely agree, it is a huge priority to provide as much support and assistance for people in hardship and thankfully the household support fund is going to continue next year which will make it a lot easier for us to provide similar levels of support. I think we probably need to try and go further, to be honest, so I agree it is a priority but certainly that's a start and it certainly supports with the cost of living crisis and homeless prevention is absolutely a key priority, so with you on that.

53 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

- 53.1 The Mayor reported that two deputations had been received from members of the public and invited Ms Barrowman and Mr Mytafidis as the spokesperson for the first deputation to come forward and address the council. The deputation related to
- 53.2 Councillor Shanks thanked Ms Barrowman and Mr Mytafidis for their deputation and stated that she attended the recent citizen's assembly at Varndean School and heard you both speak there. Our priority is to improve emotional wellbeing and mental health support for children and young people in Brighton and Hove. We are committed to ensuring a broad range of mental health support is available for children and young people to meet their individual needs, as early as possible. We, with the NHS and East and West Sussex County Councils have developed a children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health strategy – Foundations for our Future – that describes our commitment to ensuring good mental health for all our children and young people. The Strategy was co-produced with young people. With NHS Sussex we have also refreshed our Local Transformation Plan for children and young people's mental health which will shortly be published. This plan forms part of the overall strategy and describes the work undertaken, and underway, to increase and improve support for children and young people. This includes increasing our Mental Health Support Teams for schools, enhancing our Schools Wellbeing Service, expanding the Children and Young Peoples Wellbeing service, expanding Specialist CAMHS, developing support and pathways for eating disorders, and developing a Single Point of Access (SPOA). As you highlight in your deputation, we have recently undertaken a city-wide joint strategic needs assessment into mental health and wellbeing. The report was overseen by a multi-agency steering group and finds that emotional wellbeing needs in children and young people are increasing with some communities at very much higher risk. One of the seven recommendation areas is about increasing support to this age group, and

about taking a whole systems approach to address this complex problem. The fundings of the joint strategic needs assessment are supported by the data from Our Safe and Well at Schools Survey which took place in 2021 and is based on the feedback of 15,200 children aged 8 -18yrs. These assessments, which we feel are robust and have reached the broadest range of CYP voices, are our evidence of the level of need and is what we base our spending on. There is one thing that is certain about mental health, that there is no one way to support our children and young people and that it is a highly complex area. There are inherent risks to providing the wrong support and there are inherent risks to pathologising the normal reactions to significant life events and traumas. We fully acknowledge how difficult this period of time has been for children and young. We know that the increase in need has significantly impacted schools and colleges. There is a joint motion around the mental health emergency for cyp being presented to Full Council this evening This requests that a report be brought to Health and Wellbeing Board which:

- a. explores the options for rolling out school and college-based counselling across the city
- b. receives an update on funding committed at Budget Council in February on mental health first aid training.

- 53.3 The Mayor thanked Ms Barrowman and Mr Mytafidis for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. She explained that the points had been noted and the deputation would be referred to the Health & Wellbeing Board 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.
- 53.4 The Mayor then invited Annika to come forward for the second deputation and address the council on behalf of the spokesperson Ms Jany.
- 53.5 Annika thanked the Mayor and outlined the reasons for the deputation which was seeking to stop the closure of Bright Start Nursery, as it would be devastating to the community. She stated that it was an essential service for over 50 children and families with there not being any similar service provision anywhere in the area. The Nursery caters for the most vulnerable children in the city and that staff had specialist knowledge and training, dealing with vulnerable children, complex disability and medical educational needs. It was an affordable nursery open all year round from 8:00 AM till 6:00 PM. She shared personal stories of Parents who used Bright Start Nursery and highlighted their reasons for choosing the nursery. She asked the Council to recognise the beautiful asset that it had and to reconsider its decision.
- 53.6 Councillor Allbrooke thanked Annika for presenting the deputation and for also sharing her experiences. She noted that there was a petition for debate on Bright Start Nursery later, on the agenda, which also included a Labour group amendment. She stated that much of the content of the deputation asked some quite detailed questions that would be better addressed in a report to Children, Young People and Skills Committee. She suggested responding to the deputation in more detail as part of the response to the petition, and that also those detailed questions are addressed in the report.

53.7 The Mayor thanked Annika for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. She 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.

54 PETITION FOR DEBATE

54.1 The Mayor stated that where a petition secured 1,250 or more signatures it could be debated at the council meeting. She had been made aware of one such petition and invited Mrs Perera to join the meeting and to present the petition concerning the planned closure of Bright Start Nursery in Barrack Yard.

54.2 Mrs Perera thanked the Mayor and stated that the petition which had been signed by just under 1,500 people showed how important the nursery was to the Brighton community. She stated that Bright Start was a lifeline to so many families with diverse needs who would not be able to access comparable childcare from alternative providers in the city. That in the midst of a cost of living crisis, many working families were struggling to make ends meet, it was now more important than ever for local councils to provide affordable and accessible childcare that accepts all children regardless of their backgrounds, circumstances and needs. She called on the Council to oppose the closure going forward as it was strongly felt that the loss of Bright Start Nursery would do irreparable damage to the city, and solutions could be found to keep it open.

54.3 Councillor Allbrooke thanked Mrs Perera for presenting the petition and stated that she agreed that Bright Start Nursery was an incredibly important service that provided support that families needed. She believed in the value of Council run public services as they change communities and she personally cared about services provided for the city's children, young people and their wellbeing. It was recognised that should the draft proposals be taken forward that it would be a difficult decision to take but that the city faced a budget gap of £18 million in addition to 12 years of funding cuts. The Council by law could not set a deficit budget and had to balance its budget, having to make savings when funding is reduced.

54.4 Councillor O'Quinn moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Robins.

54.5 Councillor Janio spoke on the petition and noted that the setting of the budget was the responsibility of the administration and not that of the Government.

54.6 Councillor Allbrooke confirmed that she would accept the Labour amendment.

54.7 The Mayor thanked Mrs Perera for presenting the petition and put the recommendations to the vote.

54.8 **RESOLVED:**

1. That the petition is noted and referred to the Children, Young People & Skills Committee for consideration.

2. That a report comes before the January meeting of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee detailing the reasons for the closure of the Bright Start Nursery, including information on alternative provision and the actions the council will take to enable the timely placement of children in other suitable nursery provision.

55 CALL OVER FOR REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

(a) Callover

The following items on the agenda were reserved for discussion:

Item 58 Review of the Council's Constitution

Item 59 Sussex Health & Care: The Sussex Health & Care Assembly Final Terms Of Reference And The Sussex Integrated Care Strategy

(b) Receipt and/or Approval of Reports

The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that Items 58 & 59 had been reserved for discussion

(c) Oral Questions from Members

The Mayor noted that there were 16 oral questions.

56 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.

- 56.1 The Mayor noted 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 Appich

Mental Health Rapid Response service:

- 56.2 The Mental Health Rapid Response Service was launched during 2015 to improve community mental health services across the city. Sadly, I am informed that it is neither rapid, nor responsive, and only staffed by one person. Despite numerous complaints, there appears to have been no discernible improvement in the service provision, as reported to me.

Could the Chair of the Health and Well Being Board explain what actions she will take to ensure this vital service is improved given the mental health crisis we are experiencing and that we are now in an era of partnership working with the NHS?

Reply from Councillor Shanks, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board

- 56.3 The Mental Health Rapid Response Service (MHRRS) was set up in January 2013 to improve the urgent care route for people in Brighton and Hove - the service was initially established to provide primary care with a rapid access assessment. The service

accepts referrals from other professional groups including SECAMB and Sussex Police and notably is an open referral point for patients to self-refer.

The MHRSS is predominantly a telephone base service but also offers a Rapid Access Clinic to assess people face to face, within 4 hours of referral and supports the duty service of the Assessment and Treatment Service- Sussex Partnership's secondary care Community Mental Health Teams in the City.

The service is open from 0930-2200 7 days a week (after 2200HRS the service is switched over to the Sussex Mental Health Line).

The service operates with two qualified nursing staff and an unqualified worker each shift. The team have no current vacancies.

The MHRSS service takes an average of 50 to 100 calls per day. The service has strong links with NHS 111 and the Sussex Mental Healthline. The Trust has established the 'Press 2' for mental health services access route via NHS 111 from November this year. MHRSS works with a number of organisations including the community & voluntary sector. Many patients contacting MHRSS are not under the care of secondary mental health care services.

2. Councillor Grimshaw

Roof Repairs:

- 56.4 Please can I be provided with an update as to who is responsible for roof repairs of ex council properties if the premises below the roof is now in the possession of a leaseholder?

Who maintains responsibility for repairs to the roof?

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

- 56.5 Thank you for your question.
If the whole property has been sold (e.g., a house) then the repair responsibility sits with the house owner.

If the property sold is a flat and the building as a whole remains in the ownership of the Council, then the repair responsibility for a roof repair would sit with the Council as Freeholder.

3. Councillor Allcock

Weeds:

- 56.6 How many times have each street in our City had weeds cleared by Council or other contracted staff since Summer 2020?
How many times have each street in our City had leaves cleared during the Autumn since and including 2020?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.7 Thank you for your question.

It is not possible to provide details of how many times each street has been cleared of weeds or leaves because this level of data is not collected. In 2022 447 roads were cleared and in comparison, 471 roads were cleared in 2020 and 416 roads in 2021. The tasks of the Street Cleansing Service is scheduled by day/week or month as the work is based on seasons.

In the City Centre, high footfall helps reduce weed growth and the majority of roads and pavements are cleaned twice a day. There are 39 barrow rounds operating on a 7 day a week rota. In the East and West of the City, the barrow rounds are on a daily schedule, completing similar tasks each day, and there are 20 barrow rounds. These staff remove weeds as part of their daily duties, alongside clearing litter from the streets and removing stickers and fly-posts. This is supplemented by weed rippers and seasonal staff during the summer. Delays with delivery of equipment and problems with recruitment has had an impact on the effectiveness of weed removal this year. There is no data on how many times a road is cleared of leaves.

On average, 35 roads are cleared of leaves for each barrow operative in the East and West of the city per week. Roads are cleared more frequently during leaf fall because the Council is able to use mechanical sweepers to sweep the leaves and this method is quicker and more effective than manual sweeping. It should be noted that when the Green Administration came into power, there was no plan for how to manage weeds after the unanimous decision to ban pesticides. Due to a global pandemic, a national labour crisis and the costs associated with Brexit there has been weed growth throughout parts of the city. Officers have been working hard to ensure that a there is plan to deal with weeds in for the new season

4. Councillor Grimshaw

EPC legislation:

56.8 Can the Chair of Housing confirm that housing associations who house residents through our Homemove policy are being urged to observe EPC legislation (in line with privately rented housing which came into force in 2020 but SHL have until 2030)?

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

56.9 Thank you for your question. The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) Regulations 2015 do not apply to Registered Providers of social housing in their role as social landlords. However, through the Clean Growth Strategy, the UK government has set a target for social housing providers to attain the minimum rating of Energy Performance Certificate C for rented properties by 2035 (2030 for 'fuel poor' households). Each Registered Provider will be required to assess and fully understand what is required within their stock and to implement their plans to reach the target. Housing Associations are required to follow the relevant legislation and are regulated independently from the local authority, through the Regulator of Social Housing. If social housing tenants have concerns relating to their home, they should first contact their landlord. Details would usually be on their landlord's website. If they are not satisfied with the outcome, they can escalate matters through the Housing Ombudsman.

5. Councillor Grimshaw**Damp Surveys:**

- 56.10 Can the chair of housing confirm if Housing Association and Local Authority properties are surveyed by an CRDS or CSRT (certified remedial damp) accredited surveyor?

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

- 56.11 Thank you for your question.
I can confirm that the Damp Surveyor that the council's Housing Repairs and Maintenance service use is CSRT accredited.

6. Councillor Grimshaw**Mould:**

- 56.12 Does the chair of housing agree that Mould is life threatening so should be investigated by a qualified expert as a vast subject? Can the chair of housing confirm that tenants are advised they should not try to remove themselves due to sporing? And recognise that hidden mould in cavities is more dangerous than visible mould? Dead mould is even more dangerous as particles/spores smaller so more invasive to humans. Condensation mould sits on the surface, dangerous toxic mould lives in building materials and is usually caused by water ingress or burst pipes. Can the chair of housing also confirm that training is given on Environmental Health and that the relevant housing staff should be properly educated about mould?

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

- 56.13 Thank you for your question. The sad news regarding Awaab Ishak's death has understandably caused concerns with Tenants, and our sympathy goes out to those affected at this difficult time. Following this tragic case, we are reviewing our approach to addressing the common issue of condensation dampness in our housing stock. Our proposed approach is to address both the large number of damp and condensation cases reported to the Housing service, while also working with Children, Families & Schools and Public Health colleagues to develop improved risk assessment processes to pick up health concerns to empower our front-line staff with the correct advice to enable them to identify high risk cases and escalate them quickly. In addition to making sure that our front-line teams are equipped to triage cases, in particular should there be health concerns, we wish to ensure that our tenants and residents don't have barriers to reporting issues. We are also increasing resources to tackle this issue in council homes. As you have identified in your question mould can occur in a number of different locations in a building structure. However, the most common location is on the internal surface of external walls, around window reveals and at high level in the corners of walls/ceilings.
This occurs when moisture laden air comes into contact with a cold surface and causes the water vapor in the air to condense and form water.
If the surface remains wet, mould can then form. Mould can form within wall cavities and under floors however it is less likely that the resulting spores will enter the air space that

is shared with tenants so less likely to be inhaled. The current advice is to remove mould as soon as it forms using household cleaners. This is the advice that we include in our “Combating Condensation” leaflet, along with various tips and lifestyle adjustments that could significantly reduce the amount of moisture produced within properties which subsequently reduces the risk of mould forming. This advice is aimed at small quantities of mould and is intended to advise tenants how to manage it in their homes. This self-treatment is not instead of a response from the council’s Housing Repairs & Maintenance service. With more complex or persistent cases of damp and mould we use a specialist CSRT accredited Surveyor. We will be publishing advice to residents in the next issue of HomeIn and thereafter annually in the Winter edition.

7. Councillor Grimshaw

Ventilation:

- 56.14 Can the chair of housing seek to ensure that ventilation in housing is a priority and that windows should have filtered trickle vents for fresh air entry? There should then be a quiet extractor strategically placed to draw the old air 24/7.

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

- 56.15 Thank you for your question. New windows are usually fitted with a trickle vent as standard, but it is not always possible to adapt existing windows to accommodate a trickle ventilator. Where ventilation is identified as a key component causing damp, we install mechanical extract systems in the kitchen and bathroom. In more complex cases we have fitted larger scale ventilations systems which generally follow a recommendation from our damp surveyor.

8. Councillor O’Quinn

- 56.16 Enforcement – dogs off leads and cyclists on seafront lower promenade:
There are regularly a large number of dogs who are walked off lead on Brighton and Hove seafront, lower esplanade, which causes significant issues for those people who obey the rules and walk their dogs on leads. There are also a number of cyclists who cycle along the seafront where they are banned from doing so creating a hazard for pedestrians. How many enforcement notices have been given in the last year in the two situations described?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

- 56.17 Thank you for your question.
Zero Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for dogs being off leads on the seafront areas as this is covered by a local byelaw, rather than the Environmental Enforcement Framework.

During the summer months, council Environmental Enforcement Officers enforce dog exclusion on the beach and dog fouling. These are all enforced under the PSPO, Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. They do not enforce dogs off leads,

although they will try to engage and ask owners to place dogs on leads in the areas signed on the seafront.

Council Seafront Officers undertake patrols of the promenade every day throughout the year. While the team are out they engage with the public with regards to safety messaging and also enforce the byelaws with regard to dogs on leads and no cycling on the promenade. Each year the Seafront Officers engage with hundreds of cyclists on Hove Promenade and instruct them either to dismount or divert onto the cycle lane.

There has been a significant increase in both pedestrian footfall and cycling across the whole of the seafront since the start of the pandemic. As a result, the cycle lane has become busier and so too has cycling on the promenade. Observations by the Seafront Officers would suggest that the percentage split of those choosing to cycle on the promenade rather than the cycle lane has not really altered, however the increased number of cyclists overall might make it appear that the majority are cycling on the promenade.

Seafront Officers are unable to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for a breach of the byelaw unless the Police are present to take the name and address of the perpetrator. The Seafront Officers have undertaken joint patrols with the Police wherever possible. However, the priority for the Police is to respond to incidents of crime and disorder. The Police do not regard cycling bylaw offences as a priority.

9. Councillor Wilkinson

Parking Enforcement:

56.18 Given the increasing numbers of parking schemes, ETROs, and TROs across the city, what plans are in place to increase officer capacity to take action on parking infringements?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.19 TROs and ETROs can play an important role in making our streets safer, more accessible and healthier. It was disappointing that at the last ETS, the Labour and Conservative groups halted a further TRO for Elm Grove which would have seen the end of the dangerous pavement parking on that street. It would have given us a perfect opportunity to build a framework for further restrictions.

Over the last two years parking service officers have worked with NSL (our enforcement contractors) to increase the number of officers by 10 to take into account the increased enforcement across the city. This is an increase of 10% from 100 to 110. As part of existing EEC budget saving proposals for new parking schemes in 23/24 NSL are aware they'll need to recruit a further 6 FTE staff for new CPZ schemes taking the total up 116. Recruitment has been a problem in recent years and at the moment NSL are still 7 FTE staff down based on new contract levels. However, NSL have been working on an adult education programme and a range of other recruitment initiatives to improve recruitment and retention. Increasing the number of NSL officers further may be too ambitious at this time but officers will continue to review.

10. Councillor Wilkinson

56.20 Hanover and Tarner LTN Pilot Scheme:

When can the city's residents expect to see the complete results of the consultation into the Hanover and Tarner Low Traffic Neighbourhood Pilot Scheme?

What specific monitoring of traffic levels has occurred to date in respect to the scheme and if so, at which locations?

Is there any indication to date that congestion will occur in any part of the city as a result of the schemes current design?

Is air quality monitoring specific to the scheme taking place and what data is currently held on the levels of the various pollutants on the surrounding roads before the implementation of the LTN, now and what is predicted to happen on the surrounding roads. Please specify any roads on which this information is held and how residents can access such information?

What criteria is to be used to evaluate the scheme and which areas will be included in any such evaluation. Will account be taken of the quality of life to people outside this area through any changes such as increase in traffic movements, compromised road safety for pedestrians and raised levels of pollution?

Has any monitoring been carried out on travel behaviours or car ownership before the implementation of this Low Traffic Neighbourhood?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.21 Thank you for your interest in the Liveable Neighbourhood pilot Project for the Hanover & Tarner area. While Labour have lent their support to the trial publicly, the lack of engagement on it by Labour colleagues has been disappointing. I do hope your questions demonstrate a new level of interest in the matter which has generated a lot of engagement from residents in the area and interest from proponents of low traffic interventions.

You have asked a number of questions and therefore this is a rather long reply.

a. When can the city's residents expect to see the complete results of the consultation into the Hanover and Tarner Low Traffic Neighbourhood Pilot Scheme?

Response: We have been pleased with the level of interest and response to the public consultation and officers are continuing to work on developing the design for the overall scheme. This work is taking the concerns of respondents into account and considering where they would like changes to be made, and the technical implications of such changes for the whole area. The outcomes of this work will be reported to the ETS committee in March, and this will include an analysis of the responses to the consultation.

b. What specific monitoring of traffic levels has occurred to date in respect to the scheme and if so, at which locations?

Response: The baseline data report, which has been made publicly available, shows the traffic flows that have been counted, by nearly 80 automatic counters and over 50 cameras. There are too many locations to list here but are included in the data report.

c. Is there any indication to date that congestion will occur in any part of the city as a result of the schemes current design?

Response: Modelling of the design is still being undertaken as part of the technical work to establish the potential changes that could occur as a result of the design.

Monitoring of the scheme will take place, which will enable an assessment of actual changes in traffic flows and conditions as modelling can only give us a prediction based on traffic at current levels, and this tends to drop as schemes bed in and the number of people travelling actively or by public transport increases. In addition, we will collect feedback from people to inform how well the scheme is working and identify where further change may be required.

e. Is air quality monitoring specific to the scheme taking place and what data is currently held on the levels of the various pollutants on the surrounding roads before the implementation of the LTN, now and what is predicted to happen on the surrounding roads. Please specify any roads on which this information is held and how residents can access such information?

Response: Over ten new air quality monitoring tubes have been installed as part of this project, which will complement existing monitoring sites. These are located in the following streets, and some include more than one tube. The streets are Franklin Road, Elm Grove, Islingword Road, Southover Street, Queen's Park Road, Egremont Place, Carlton Hill, Morley Street and Richmond Parade. Data collection began in the middle of this year and will remain in place for two years following the implementation of the scheme.

Air quality data is reported each year to provide indications of average annual changes. The results will be reported in the council's annual status report on air quality, which is usually available in July and published on the council's website.

f. What criteria is to be used to evaluate the scheme and which areas will be included in any such evaluation. Will account be taken of the quality of life to people outside this area through any changes such as increase in traffic movements, compromised road safety for pedestrians and raised levels of pollution?

Response: The draft project monitoring framework for the project was agreed as part of the report that was considered by this committee in June this year. It includes a number of indicators that the project will be assessed against including traffic and cycle flows, air quality, collisions and public perceptions. A number of permanent improvements to streets bordering the scheme are being planned in consultation with local residents, subject to agreement at ETS. These are likely to include: a ban on pavement parking on Elm Grove; a number of additional crossings on Elm Grove and Queen's Park Road; measures to slow traffic; trees and greening. £1.1m of funding for these changes will come from the Carbon Neutral Fund.

The trial scheme will be implemented under a Experimental Traffic Regulation Order. A decision to remove or make the scheme permanent will be required before the end of the 18-month trial period. The council will welcome feedback from residents while the

scheme is in place in order to assess and determine if any changes are required during the pilot period.

g. Has any monitoring been carried out on travel behaviours or car ownership before the implementation of this Low Traffic Neighbourhood?

Response: As part of the public consultation that took place for the project during August and September this year, questions were asked about travel behaviour in the area. This enabled people to rate conditions for walking/wheeling and cycling in the area, and express their perceptions of safety when walking/wheeling and cycling in the area. Data on levels of car ownership in the area will become available following the release of 2011 census data, which is expected soon.

11. Councillor Wilkinson

56.22 VAWG:

What actions has the Council taken over the last 12 months to tackle the issue of violence against women and girls?

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

56.23 Thank you for your question. From 1st April 2022 the joint unit arrangements with East Sussex County Council were dissolved and a new Violence Against Women and Girls unit was established. Since then, the unit having been working on several areas to address Violence Against Women and Girls, including a public consultation which will inform a new strategy which will go to the council's TECC committee at a future meeting for approval. As well as this, the council's new unit has been developing work with the International Women's network to ensure marginalised survivors are supported. With the introduction of the new Domestic Abuse Act, the unit have been working with colleagues in the council's Housing services to update policies and procedures relating to domestic abuse. TECC committee agreed to the funding of a worker to sit within the new multiple compound needs team to support those affected by domestic abuse. New burdens funding has allowed the commission of 8 new services for those experiencing domestic violence and abuse as well as the development of a flexible fund and provision for translation services including British Sign Language. The new Violence Against Women and Girls team continue to co-ordinate and manage weekly Multi Agency Risk Assessment conferences for high-risk victims, and have held a development day, delivered with voluntary sector partners, including training sessions on domestic abuse. The council has also started work on its White Ribbon accreditation, including setting up a network of ambassadors and champions and holding a half day conference around standing up to domestic abuse. Training along with other pan-Sussex partners has been delivered including the impacts of domestic abuse on children, stalking, bystanders, and harmful practices training. The council, in partnership with East and West Sussex County Councils, and the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime commissioner, was successful in bidding for funding from Safer Streets tranches 3 and 4, run by the Home Office.

This includes money for additional police patrols, taxi marshals, an additional beach buggy for the beach patrol, improved lighting in areas of the city identified as high risk places for Violence Against Women and Girls, the development of safe spaces a 'do the

right thing' media campaign, and the development of training for door staff as well as the creation of a Violence Against Women and Girls coordinator post to sit within Sussex Police to co-ordinate the safer streets work. Following the re-commissioning of domestic violence services in the City last year, further to the VAWG strategy agreed in March 2019, a cross party members working group was established to scrutinise the procurement process. It found that the procurement was completed legally but it made a number of recommendations regarding commissioning of these types of services in future which were agreed by Policy and Resources committed in July earlier this year. These related to increased oversight and involvement and the need for more qualitative and social value – focused procurement for such services. I am also pleased to announce that earlier this week we were informed that we have been allocated over £1.2m of additional new burdens funding from DLUHC over the next two years, to enable us to meet our duty under the domestic abuse act to support those in safe accommodation. While not limited only for women and girls, we will ensure that we use the money to continue to provide services for all experiencing domestic abuse into safe and supported accommodation

12. Councillor Wilkinson

56.24 Care co-operatives:

What work has the Council done to explore the role of co-operatives in the social care sector, and whether the co-operative model could support adult social care in Brighton and Hove, and what is your assessment of the viability and benefits of more co-operatism in the city's social care sector?

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

56.25 Care co-operatives are in the majority developed, owned and managed by their members and as such the commissioning relationship is different from traditional care services. The city council has been working with a newly established care co-operative in the city to support with the feasibility and establishment of this new venture. They have now registered as a constituted group and are at the early stages of developing the organisation further, having initially had a workshop event to encourage people to come together to explore the opportunity of building on the mutual aid model. A small grant from the council was provided to support this development work. While in the main, cooperatives are small scale, they can offer a much needed and valuable service for the people they support. Given the continued enormous pressures on social care, service developments outside of the traditional services are welcomed. Cllr Shanks who Chairs the Health and Wellbeing Board will be meeting with the organisation shortly to discuss the establishment of this new co-operative.

13. Councillor Wilkinson

56.26 Cost-of-Living Emergency:

In October this Council supported a Labour motion to declare a Cost-of-Living Emergency in the city. It is clear to all that the cost-of-living crisis is spiralling out of control and will affect all our residents, from the most vulnerable to homeowners and renters, pensioners and businesses. What has the council done since to;

Promote the emergency?

Develop plans for a formal emergency response?

Convene a cost-of-living summit?

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

56.27 The city council continues to play a vital role in convening support with city partners and subsequently promoting this information. The council has created a new Cost of Living Support hub on the website which brings together useful information in one resource, showing residents how they can access help over the coming months. This isn't just an online service- the Community Hub continues to provide a point of phone contact for those who are not able to access information online. Furthermore, the city council has now distributed a leaflet to every household in the city. We know that this has had a notable impact because it has resulted in a substantial increase of applications to the Household Support Fund. Other promotional activity has included continued social media campaigns, repeat news stories to keep the issue alive in the press so as many residents know about existing support, with further messaging planned as we come into the traditionally coldest parts of the year.

We have been working for months with partners to support our residents through this unprecedented cost of living crisis and to suggest otherwise demonstrates a lack of awareness on the efforts of so many amazing community and third sector organisations. As a result of the promotion of the support available, demand for help is now incredibly high within both the voluntary sector and the council's welfare services. This means that delivery of services is becoming increasingly challenging, with capacity being stretched to the limit.

Residents are able to apply for help from the Household Support Fund through the council's portals. Funds have also been distributed to organisations across the community and voluntary sector, so that assistance can be given directly to parts of the community that need help most. The Household Support Fund is also bolstering the Energyworks service (Citizen's Advice Brighton & Hove and Money Advice Plus), ensuring that it will have a wider reach in the coming months. There are several other energy support schemes available, including the Energy Bills Support Scheme, warm home discount and the now-completed Energy Rebate programme, along with advice and help from BHESCo (Brighton & Hove Energy Services Cooperative). The work with BHESCo includes warm home advice visits with energy saving kits funded by Public Health, and nationally funded services LEAP (Local Energy Advice Partnership) and NEA (National Energy Action). We will also explore new options for supporting residents financially, further to grant applications and as and when funding opportunities arise.

As with previous years, the city council continues to work closely with the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership to ensure that food help is in place and promoted over the winter. The Warm Welcome Directory initiative is now well underway, connecting residents across the city from Whitehawk to Hangleton to a variety of free indoor places and activities.

Earlier in the year, a Justgiving page was set up in partnership with CAB and the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership, to help people in poverty with food and fuel costs. The campaign initially provided a way for residents to donate back the government's £150 energy rebate, but it has continued to raise funds throughout the year. The campaign hit a milestone of £60,000 last week which is testimony to the brilliant community spirit in Bright & Hove. This will continue to be promoted by the council and partners into next year.

Regrettably, even with all these measures in place, there is still a level of need in the city that cannot be met with the limited funding from government, no matter what we do

locally. This is why, following the P&R report on 6 October, 17 individual lobbying actions were undertaken. I have written to relevant government ministers on everything from increasing the local housing allowance, freezing rents to providing more support for our local small and medium businesses, although to date we have yet to receive responses.

Plans for the Cost-of-Living summit are advancing, with the date set for 24 January. This builds on the partnership work that has been underway now for two years where I continue to meet to listen to and act where I can on the concerns of the local community and voluntary sector organisations as much as local small and medium businesses. The summit will enable organisations from the public, private and community and voluntary sectors to share local intelligence and identify gaps in support, whilst also discussing practical opportunities for collaboration. Invitations will be issued shortly to partners across the city.

14. Councillor Yates

56.28 Can the administration reassure residents of Moulsecoomb that the authority has no intention of allowing properties it owns the freehold of in Moulsecoomb Way become additional student housing. These properties provide valuable employment and economic benefits to the area and the whole city and should not be sold off or leased out for a quick buck from developers to the detriment of the local community.

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

56.30 The city council owns the freehold of a site in Moulsecoomb Way on which there are 2 ageing industrial buildings let on leases which have 33 years remaining, with a combined rent of £5,000 pa.

The head lessee of the site has been working with a developer on redeveloping the site. The council has received this proposal which looks to redevelop the site as student housing and employment space. Following an initial discussion of the proposal at the council's Asset Management Board on 29 April this year the developer was advised that the proposal for student housing in that location was not supported by the council.

With only a 33-year unexpired lease term it is not financially viable for the head lessee to redevelop the site without a new longer lease from the council. The Council has no rights to terminate the lease prematurely, and thus no right to redevelop. The site could therefore remain undeveloped until 2055 providing a nominal income for the council.

While the Council is under no obligation to enter into negotiations or consider restructuring the existing leases to facilitate redevelopment, in order to be satisfied that the council has fully considered the proposal it has been recommended that officers present a more detailed briefing of the site redevelopment proposals to the next Asset Management Board meeting.

15. Councillor Bell

56.31 **Proposed Happy Valley cycle path**

The council is proposing constructing a new cycle path through Happy Valley adjacent to Falmer Road, whilst there is already a cycle path that runs between Ovingdean and Woodingdean that is well-used. The current path would be used even more if it had a proper surface which it doesn't, despite having been repaired several times.

Can the Chair provide a breakdown of how many times the walking & cycling path between Ovingdean and Woodingdean that serves Old Parish Lane has been resurfaced over the past five years, how much this has cost and the reasons why the Administration is considering funding a second path so close to the first one?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.32 Parish Lane bridleway links Ovingdean and Woodingdean. It was identified through the volunteer Path Warden scheme in 2017 as a popular commuter route, but was very deeply rutted from farm vehicle use. In agreement with the Local Access Forum, the northern section was levelled and resurfaced in road stone in 2018 (costing £34,500) and the southern section was resurfaced in 2019 (at a cost of £20,900). Road stone was used as per normal practice, which is hard wearing and thus suitable for use on farm tracks that are regularly used by tractors. However, local residents have raised concerns that the path is not optimised for cyclists / wheeled users due to the loose stone nature of it. Due to the importance of this commuter route between Ovingdean and Woodingdean options are being considered to improve the surface finish (using the previous road stone as a sub-base).

Parish Lane Path (Bridleway BW B26):



The path along the bottom of Happy Valley is currently a permissive bridleway and grass covered. Hard surfacing this would create a link between Woodingdean and

Rottingdean and link up to the shared use cycle path further south along the Falmer Road – a route to Longhill School.

Both paths are being considered as they serve different communities (Ovingdean to Woodingdean / Rottingdean to Woodingdean) and are separated by a very steep hill between the two (Ovingdean Road). The proposals are also consistent with routes identified in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Happy Valley Path (Permissive Bridleway):



16. Councillor Simson

56.33 Problems with solar panels on council houses in Woodingdean

Several years ago the council fitted solar panels to a small number of tenants' properties in Woodingdean.

There have subsequently been problems with birds nesting under the panels, as no protective netting was fitted at the time.

Also, I'm told by tenants living in those properties that they've never seen any reduction in the cost of their electricity supply, despite hosting these solar panels.

Can the Chair advise:

- Why protected netting has not been fitted to solar panels on council houses to protect them; and whether council is considering installing such netting now?
- What monitoring the council has done on these panels, including into whether electricity costs are being reduced, considering the substantial original cost of supplying them?

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

56.34 Thank you for your question. Where there are persistent issues with birds nesting under panels, and is causing a problem for residents, the council will install 'bird protection' measures to existing solar PV systems. It is also the council's intention to install this as standard as part of the new solar PV programme from 2023 onwards. The performance of solar PV systems is monitored through an on-line portal that the council has in place. This enables the council to identify any issues with its systems pro-actively in addition to direct reports from residents. The solar PV systems should be generating electricity during daylight hours throughout the year with the highest electricity generation on the sunniest days. This would mean that whilst the electricity is being generated residents in houses or bungalows will be using this rather than drawing it from the 'grid'. Residents can save money on their energy bills in this way; however, it would not show up specifically on an electricity bill, but the electricity bill should be lower than it would otherwise have been. To maximise savings, we encourage residents to use electrical devices during periods that the panels are producing electricity. If there are specific addresses where there are concerns about any of these issues, we would be happy to investigate further, including giving advice to residents about how to maximise the benefits of the panels.

17. Councillor Barnett

56.35 Housing repairs answerphone

Council tenants chasing up their housing repairs are still having to listen to a council voice mail when they call. The voice mail says that the council is behind on its repairs 'due to covid' and that the council is 'working hard to catch up'.

This information is not correct. Since the Council insourced the housing repairs service in March 2020, the housing repairs backlog has been going up each and every month and been increasing consistently. For example, since October this year the backlog has increased from 9,000 to above 10,000. This is nothing to do with Covid and there is no catch-up going on.

Can the chair advise:

- a) Will this voicemail be changed to reflect the accurate current situation?
- b) When can residents expect to speak to a person when they call the Housing Department Housing Repairs line instead of receiving an answer phone message?

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

56.36 Thank you for your question. The council's Housing Repairs and Maintenance service Call Centre continues to exceed its call answering targets with 92%, 15,973 out of 17,315, calls answered in Quarter 2 2022/23. The target is 85%. While I understand receiving a recorded message answer can be frustrating the Call Centre continues to provide a good service with a high percentage of calls answered. Our KPI related to 'Surveyed tenants satisfied with repairs: standard of work' is above target at 99% against a target of 96% as is our KPI on 'Surveyed tenants satisfied with repairs: overall customer service' at 98% against a target of 96%.

Our KPI on emergency repairs completed within 24 hours has continued its improved performance and at Q2, 2022 / 23 stands at 98.6%, 2,645 of 2,682 repairs, against a target of 99%. Officers in the council's Housing Repairs & Maintenance service have

worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to provide tenants with an essential repairs service.

However, as reported to Housing Committee, a backlog of routine repairs and empty council homes has built up due to Covid19 impacting staffing levels and contractor capacity required to complete the typical number of jobs raised each month. As of November 2022, the number of outstanding tasks sitting with the service was 10,378, an increase on the previously reported figure. This increase is primarily due to seasonal change. For example, the Council received 317 roof repair requests in the first two weeks of November compared with 213 over the whole of October.

We currently have a contractor capacity issue with building work which has significantly impacted our ability to reduce outstanding tasks. We have been recruiting extra operatives to our service and are also reviewing options to increase our contractor base to address outstanding works.

18. Councillor Barnett

56.37 Empty seniors council houses

Statistics from the Council's Seniors Housing Department show that there are currently 37 seniors housing properties sitting empty.

Why, when there are many elderly residents in the city desperate for a place in a sheltered block, are there so many empty seniors council homes with no one living in them, right across the city?

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

56.38 Thank you for your question. We continue to show progress in our priority work of tackling the Covid related backlog of empty seniors housing properties. The number of empty senior housing properties changes daily and as of 7th December the council had 34 of this type of home empty.

The council's Tenancy Services team has let over 100 seniors housing properties this year; however, some senior's homes are more difficult to let than other council properties. To increase the number of lettings Housing are working to maximise interest in seniors housing properties and make it easier for people to apply. If you know of individuals who are looking for a place in a sheltered block, please encourage them to come forward. The council is also carrying out targeted works to resolve a handful of longer-term voids.

19. Councillor Bagaeen

56.39 Greenest city centres in the UK

In a recent study on Britain's greenest city centres published in November, which compared 68 municipalities in Great Britain with populations of at least 100,000, Brighton and Hove came 40th out of 68.

Three metrics of "greenness" were used:

Tree cover using an algorithm to randomly sample recent aerial imagery

The presence of green spaces using open-source data from Ordnance Survey (Great Britain's national mapping agency)

The normalised difference vegetation index (NDVI), which uses satellite observations of light absorption and reflection to measure vegetation cover in a given area

This is another unwelcome ranking result for Brighton city centre, after it was ranked the 8th most crime-ridden out of 33,000 LSOAs in England and Wales.

Much of the vegetation in the city centre has been neglected by the Council and areas that were once vibrant vegetation spaces have become desolate and deprived of vegetation. Victoria Gardens is a case in point. Planter boxes are left vandalised and overrun with weeds.

Why after twelve years of Green/Labour Councils is Brighton performing so poorly in the greenest city centre national index and what steps will be taken to turn this around?

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

56.40 Last year, the council invested £1 million in tree planting which led to an increase in staff which has significantly grown the organisation's ability to plant more trees- prior to this investment the council only had resources to plant an average of 80 trees a year. Last year council teams planted 425 trees and 2,530 young tree seedlings, known as whips. This investment comes despite twelve years of Conservative led austerity which has seen over £110m taken from our budget and the Treasury persistently refusing to specifically fund either climate mitigation or adaptation at a local authority level.

We are also working closely with local community groups who are an essential part of planting trees, growing plants and increasing biodiversity. Volunteers from the Brighton & Hove Green Spaces Forum have won £130,000 from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund to plant 272 large trees. This follows last year's successful funding bids to plant 138 trees across the city. The city council is also currently working with communities to improve access and biodiversity on Providence Place, Dorset Gardens, Turner Park, St Nicholas Churchyard and Regency Square. Our plans for the Royal Pavilion Garden focus on creating a wildlife haven in the heart of the city.

We have been working with our family of schools to plant 30 disease-resistant elm trees on Surrenden campus during National Tree Week a few weeks ago- this is thought to be the first avenue of elm trees planted in the city since Victorian times. This project is one way of ensuring the future of elms in our city, providing habitats for wildlife such as the [white-letter hairstreak butterfly](#) which breeds on elm. The avenue of trees will form a wildlife corridor in and out of the city centre, linking Hollingbury and Burstead Woods, the Dorothy Stringer nature reserve woodland, Balfour's wildlife reserve and Varndean's wildlife areas. The tree canopy will link up the mature tree line into Withdean and Preston parks and out into the South Downs National Park, bringing nature into the city. Brighton & Hove's schools part of the City of Meadows project to create wildlife havens in schools grounds, and The Aquifer project, which is creating 'rain gardens' to soak up and purify water run-off from urban roads and provide new green wetland areas. Half of the city's schools (and growing) are involved with a new climate strategy called Our City, Our World and are working to bring nature and green spaces into their schools grounds. Brighton & Hove is home to the national elm collection and is known nationally for the way it manages elm disease. We have also celebrated our fantastic elm collection for example with the St James' elm in Preston Park nominated as part of Queen's Green Canopy.

The city has sadly lost hundreds of trees due to elm disease and ash die back, the loss of trees is driven by the climate crisis as wetter winters create conditions for disease to spread. The Woodland Trust/National Trust predict the UK will lose 80-90% of ash trees. We're using this as an opportunity to develop areas with a wider range of species and

habitat diversity to cope with disease (elm replanting is with disease-resistant elms). We've put in place a city-wide ash dieback regeneration plan and are planting 14,000 young trees (whips) this planting season. We are investing funding to explore innovative methods of planting trees on narrower streets across the city.

Further to the improvements in the Valley Gardens scheme, which has involved planting more than 100 trees and a wildflower meadow, 1,000 square metres of new biodiverse habitat were created in the heart of the city.

The next stage of Valley gardens redevelopment will see approximately 8,800 m2 of new public space created and at least 30 new trees planted. All while the planning consent for the new Kingsway to the Sea project has greenlit a huge boost to plants and biodiversity on Hove's seafront with the new tree, grassland and perennial garden areas creating a renewed greenspace that offers more varied landscaped areas to facilitate a significant increase in habitat and biodiversity. New planting will achieve the targeted 20% Biodiversity Net Gain over the existing site.

The council continues to protect nature through regional partnerships such as The Living Coast Biosphere and the Sussex Local Nature Partnership. Current projects include creating a new nature and wildlife habitat on the Eastern seafront, more chalk meadows in the city, planting 8,000 trees and shrubs on Carden Hill and rewilding at Waterhall to restore biodiversity on a former council golf course.

We continue to face accusations of how this administration is failing in its environmental duties yet we assert, with substantial evidence, the opposite. It was only months ago you claimed that we weren't doing enough on climate change by incorrectly citing scoring from the Carbon Disclosure Project. We've since been awarded among the top marks of any council in the country as part of the CDP, for our work.

Through your question today you have criticised the administration for not having enough vegetation but through the NOM you brought to September ETS you criticise the council for being too lenient on vegetation when it comes to street-growing wildflowers. You even contradict yourself in your question today saying that we are overrun with vegetation. Which is it?

The broader context is important too: the UK is one of the most nature depleted of any European country and this requires central government funding and projects that communities can deliver. To this end, the Government must end the rhetoric on caring for nature while simultaneously greenlighting new oil, coal and gas; it must urgently set credible, comprehensive and deliverable nature targets. The Environment All Party Parliamentary Group in October drew up a list of ten proposals that would improve nature- many of these, ironically, are things that the Conservative opposition describe as 'pet projects.'

20. Councillor Brown

56.41 Hove drains

Parts of Hove Park Ward, particularly Goldstone Crescent and Goldstone Close were very badly flooded recently. The leaves were obviously part of the problem but as a state of the art pumping tanker was unable to completely unblock a drain there has to be a serious maintenance failure.

How often are the drains inspected and what is going to be done about the badly blocked ones?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.42 The topography of the area and the location of properties in Goldstone Crescent and Goldstone Close means that during extreme rainfall events a lot of water is funnelled from adjacent roads such as Woodland Avenue. When it rains heavily on hills, water often flows over the gully tops and isn't absorbed until reaches gullies on lower point. Leaves when wet can obstruct gully grills and significantly slow the water from draining away, which in this case resulted in localised flooding.

The gullies in this area are cleansed annually but two gullies at the bottom of Woodland Avenue and two in Goldstone Close have blocked outlets and will be replaced, however, this was not the actual cause of the flood. It must be acknowledged that it is difficult to improve the existing highway drainage system to point where it will cater for extreme rain fall events alongside the impact of falling leaves. Both the highways and City Cleans teams are working hard to tackle the impact of leaves by focussing on areas where blockages are known to cause problems for residents

The sewer system into which highway drainage frequently discharges is managed by Southern Water and in many locations in the city the sewers are at or near capacity. When this system is overwhelmed, it affects ability of our gullies to discharge into it. The council and Southern Water are looking to use more sustainable urban drainage solutions where water from roads runs in to a series of natural basins from where it can be gradually absorbed into the ground. This is in its infancy and the current planned schemes are for areas where there is a high risk of property flooding and sewage surcharging.

21. Councillor McNair

56.43 Security at the Gathering Place, Hollingbury

The Gathering Place laundry keeps on being vandalised despite recently having a new door fitted. Would it be possible to have CCTV fitted to reduce the prevalence of antisocial behaviour?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.44 Thank you for your question and for raising this disappointing occurrence of antisocial behaviour. The council are aware of the issue and as such there has been a request to repair the door and to provide a lock to help prevent further incidents.

There are no current plans to install CCTV at the Gathering Place but the council will continue to monitor the issues at The Gathering Place and exploring different options, including the use of CCTV, to address the issues.

22. Councillor Meadows

56.45 Parking arrangements at Old Boat Community Centre, Hollingbury

Many children and vulnerable adults visit the Old Boat Corner Community Centre and the Nautical Training Corp at the bottom of Carden Hill. Carden Hill is a major artery where cars drive fast, and there are many parked vans and a bend at the bottom of the

road making crossing particularly dangerous. Would it be possible to investigate providing a pedestrian crossing at the bottom of Carden Hill to help children and adults negotiate the road safely?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.46 Thank you for the request for a pedestrian crossing. Officers will engage with Cllr Meadows to clarify the location and then add this to our assessment list for the Pedestrian Crossing Programme. Officers will also provide further information on the Pedestrian Crossing Programme

23. Councillor Theobald

56.47 Council flood prevention measures in Patcham
Homes in Warmdene Road have gates to prevent water flooding their homes. During the recent torrential rain, it is also apparent that selected homes in Winfield Avenue also suffer from significant flooding, possibly because of inadequate drainage and also because of the camber of the road. Will Officers look into fitting gates for relevant flood victims in Winfield Avenue?

56.48 Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.49 The Council has been working hard to adapt climate change mitigations right across the city. Without adequate government funding this is a difficult task but we are determined to do what we can to protect our residents.

The local flood risk strategy, which is currently in draft format, will be looking at the flood risk across the city. The resultant Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) will identify areas around the city where a feasibility study will be undertaken to identify where further investigations and potential schemes will be needed.

The properties in Winfield Road will be considered as part of the SWMP.

In 2018 Brighton and Hove City Council undertook a property protection scheme for properties in Central Hove, Carden area and Portslade. This scheme was developed from the previous Local Flood Risk Strategy of 2016 and was funded through local levy payments from the Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

The Council has been actively promoting Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) schemes for the city, with a European funded project at Carden Avenue and Dale Drive, which proved to be successful in reducing reported flooding in the recent rain period.

The Council has secured funding from Highways England, to undertake a Rainscape project at Wild Park, designed to manage water in a natural and sustainable way.

The Council has also been working as partner to The Aquifer Partnership (TAP) in promoting and contributing to the SuDS in schools, which is a Department for Education initiative.

24. Councillor Lewry

56.50 Bin service on Harmsworth Crescent, Hangleton

There are recurring issues with the City Clean bin collection service at Harmsworth Crescent that are related to the council's dedicated bin storage area.

The bin storage area at Harmsworth Crescent serves three flats and was put in place by the council. However, City Clean frequently does not move these heavy bins out from the storage area for collection. This means that bins are often not collected, resulting in residents having to subsequently chase up catch-up collections with City Clean.

Can this situation be resolved, so that residents' bin services are completed each week for the residents of Harmsworth Crescent?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

56.51 I am sorry to hear that there are issues with the bin collections from Harmsworth Crescent. I have asked Council officers to investigate the cause of the missed collections and work with colleagues to resolve the situation to enable the weekly bin collections to be undertaken.

25. Councillor Theobald

56.52 Schedule of public toilet refurbishment

At the last meeting of the Full Council, in response my oral question, I was promised a schedule of refurbishment for public toilets in the city, which I have yet to receive.

Please can you provide me with this information here, in written form.

56.53 **Reply from Councillor Davis / Hills, Joint Chairs of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

Thank you for your question and I am sorry that we didn't share this information with you directly. We did inform councillors at the last ETS that the refurbishment of Station Road, Kings Esplanade, Daltons and Saltdean Undercliff started on Monday 28th November.

The refurbishment is scheduled to take several months but as may be expected it is not possible to give an exact date of reopening at present as this will likely result in the closures of other sites due to the current budget pressures. The team are working through what the options are.

Consideration is now being given to Phase 2 of the refurbishment, although no decisions will be made until Budget Council has set the budget for next year, taking into account the need for savings to the public toilet budget.

A report on public toilets will be presented at the January meeting of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee.

57 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 57.1 The mayor noted that oral questions had been submitted and that 30 minutes was set aside for the duration of the item. He asked that both the questioner and responder endeavour to keep their questions and answers as short as possible, in order to enable the questions listed to be taken.
- 57.2 Councillor Appich asked:
Thank you very much. I understand that there is huge demand for emergency and temporary accommodation in this city, I have seen from the TBM7 budget papers that there is a significant overspend showing in the budget line. Could the co-chair of housing please let me know the current number of residents housed in temporary accommodation?
- 57.3 Councillor Gibson replied:
Thank you for your question, Carmen, and thank you for just speaking to me briefly before. I have looked and that is the one number that I've looked up which I had done anyway, but unfortunately the best data I can get, and I'm expecting a bit more in a few days, is for September but it tells quite a positive story because nobody wants anyone to be in emergency accommodation any longer than the absolute minimum and between September this year and September last year the number in emergency accommodation has reduced from 766 to 524 and overall, if you include temporary accommodation, the number from September a year ago was 2013 and is now 1809, so that's a positive story but there's still a long way to go and anything reported to the TBM's reflects the expected trajectory and if we deviate from that it's not so good but it's coming down and it's how long can we keep it coming down, if I'm honest, because we know that people are under threat of eviction and that at the moment rents are being forced up and there's a huge pressure, but what we've got to do is really up our game in prevention because if we can't do that then this good progress we've made will just go backwards in the months to come but we'll do our best.
- 57.4 Councillor Allcock asked a supplementary question:
Thank you very much, David. Do you know the destination of residents after they leave temporary accommodation?
- 57.5 Councillor Gibson replied:
That's a really wide question and it's best to give you a written answer which I'm sure you'd prefer, but it is varied. Sometimes it's council accommodation, sometimes it's direct let or private rented, sometimes people move away, sometimes people get a reconcile with family that they'd had a breakup with but I'll get you the details.
- 57.6 Councillor Bell asked:
Thank you very much, Madam Mayor. I'm sure myself and my Conservative group really welcome the Green Administrations U-turn on walking away from Grounded Events to bringing in the London Marathon Events as secure the marathon for next year. I'd like to know how much money we are exposed at as a council to Grounded Events in the fact that they have gone into administration and what is the likelihood of us getting that money back?

57.7 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied:

Thank you, Cllr Bell, for your question. Let's just be clear, we didn't walk away from DUC and we had to scramble a deal even though DUC withheld information until informing us that they were going into administration, they constantly told us that they were in a position to both pay back all debts and run future events. The Council informed them that their license was on the premise that they would pay back all debts before the event and, scroll forward, we held the emergency TECC so that representatives from the TECC committee could talk about this and the main priority there was to protect the monies paid by charities and individuals towards the 2023 event that said to be in the region of about a million pounds. In the urgency committee the option of offering a license to London Marathon Events was presented and London Marathon Events have agreed to protect those entries in exchange for a license to run the event for three years, then plus two years. A number of conditions, as you will be familiar, were agreed at the committee to pursue the officer and for our officers to use delegated powers to complete the negotiation. A full list of conditions as agreed and terms of two year license of extension were also agreed, there has been no reduction of income directly to the City Council against the 2023 pricing over the 5 years. All the key costs will be carried by London Marathon Events. I'm happy to take a supplementary, Madame Mayor.

57.8 Councillor Bell asked a supplementary question:

Can I thank the Leader of the Council for a positive and comprehensive reply. I didn't ask for it previously, but I did of Cllr Osborne, and I just wanted to know whether or not the Administration are prepared to apologise to the city and the residents and to those who are owed money, because we knew that they were in difficulties for at least the last two years and over the last four.

57.9 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied:

Thank you, Cllr Bell. I'm not prepared to do that because, as I said, GUC withheld information and until informing us that they were both going into administration they constantly told us that they are in a position to pay back all debt and run future events. When we are told that, we take people on their advice, there is due diligence done of course by the events team and the broader directorate and we rely on that intelligence and we rely on our officers to probe the contracts that we have with providers across the city. I think we'll all agree that the entire way in which events have had to operate because of Covid, the cost of living crisis and because of all of the other pressures that are currently on events that we are in fairly exceptional circumstances. As it stands, outstanding debts with GUC are going to be managed through the administration process, the license of course for the London Marathon Events event does not form any part of the arrangement between GUC and London Marathon Events and we are acting of course purely as a landlord and we're no way in partnership with any operator, as such we have no direct responsibility or oversight on commercial agreements made by operators in the city. I hope that answers Cllr Bell's questions.

57.10 Councillor Allcock asked:

Thank you Madame Mayor. Cllr Davis, can you please describe the criteria that the Council uses to evaluate and select locations for the deployment of new Council hangars. Specifically how the criteria was applied, or is applied, and if reasonable and well founded objections from residents were considered before reporting to the ETS committee on the deployment of options.

57.11 Councillor Davis replied:

Thanks for your question, Cllr Allcock. The scoring matrix has got many different points on it would take me a long time and I haven't got every single detail. Would you be happy if I got you an officer to give you a written response to give you that detail?

57.12 Councillor Allcock asked a supplementary question:

Madame Mayor, I'd be happy for those details to be sent, particularly about how the criteria was applied, but surely Cllr Davis would know if well founded objections from residents were considered before reporting to the ETS committee? Is Cllr Davis aware that the Green Administration have advised contractors who were installing cycle hangars to call the police immediately if there was any trouble in response to residents politely sharing their concerns?

57.13 Councillor Davis replied:

I think this is connected with a piece of ward work that Cllr Allcock in Cissbury Road, and I can't honestly say that I know about every single vocal transaction between residents and officers, but I am happy to look into it for you, John, if you'd like to write to me.

57.14 Councillor Simson asked:

Pavilion Gardens is supposed to be the jewel in the crown of our city, but is proving to be one of the most dangerous places to be, especially late at night. We've recently heard of attacks and even a serious rape happening there. The Council has also had ongoing requests from colleagues to clean up the toilets because of the state of them. Please can the Leader of the Council tell me what his Administration is doing, or is going to do, to ensure residents and visitors are safe in this important central location in our city.

57.15 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied:

Thank you, Cllr Simson. Of course we take very seriously the safety of residents and indeed you'll be hopefully pleased to know that in my quarterly meetings with Justin Burtenshaw, the cities divisional commander for Sussex Police, that the Pavilion Gardens, the Level and New Road are the permanent items on the agenda and we take the safety of those areas very seriously. Work has started, and I tried this morning, Cllr Simson to find out exactly when, but I have had it confirmed that work has started to replace the existing light fittings to improve the lighting in the Gardens after a £70,000 grant was awarded to the city to improve lighting in Pavilion Gardens. This was actually under a Home Office grant, so thank you Home Office, you'll not hear me say that very often. The beauty of part of that project is that they'll be moved to LED's as they're brighter and they tend to have a longer life as well. We're not just talking about a change that would be better for today's health and safety, it would be better in the longer term as well. We've been working very closely with the chief executive of the Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust to take care of that work because we all know that's a sensitive site and the work needs to be done there very sensitively. I know from the discussions with the police that there are increased daily patrols around and through the pavilion gardens with the neighbourhood policing team along with additional support from the tactical enforcement unit and our own field officers and that we are working with the Brighton & Hove Business Crime Reduction Partnership. I was along New Road last night and the beach hut has been moved along New Road for the winter and the spring months, but

police partners attending routinely at the hut as well. I know also that a community meeting has been set up for all businesses in and around New Road and Pavilion Gardens for next month as well. I do have to say, though, that there is some important context to the question, isn't there, because 12 years of Government cuts have actually seen the quantity of police on our streets reduced. I looked up the figures that were published only on the 2nd of December and there are 230 fewer police officers in Sussex Police since 2010, by the way that number increased only by 4 in the last year presumably because of people retiring and so on. So if we are going to talk about how seriously we take the crime against the person in the city, we also have to talk about where some of the blame for that lies, and I'm afraid that's with Government cuts. Happy to take a supplementary.

57.16 Councillor Simson asked a supplementary question:

It's very interesting to hear the Leader of the Council mention New Road because I know that renovations of the Corn Exchange and the Old Pavilion Theatre will soon be completed and will create a whole exciting new venue there adjacent to Pavilion Gardens and New Road, however, New Road is currently very unkempt, untidy and dirty and like Cllr Mac Cafferty I've walked through there several times recently and it's been inundated with rubbish et cetera. My question really is, what plans is the council taking to clear the area up on a regular basis because every day it's just covered in rubbish, and we heard today about a business there that's been fined heavily for putting rubbish out half an hour early. Perhaps the Council should be looking at fining itself for letting it get in such a state every day of the week.

57.17 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied:

Thank you very much, I'm glad you raised tidying up New Road because I helped tidy up New Road and Pavillion Gardens only a few weeks ago myself and I am working very closely with both the Royal Pavilion Museum Trust and their Brighton Festival and their staff and volunteers are very keen to continue with volunteering. Of course Cllr Simson makes a very good point which is the cleanliness of the city centre is extremely important and I'm weekly meeting with the executive director I routinely, in those meetings, stress the importance of not just cleanliness but also things such as the removal of graffiti and tagging. I will do so again as the result of the question from Cllr Simson this evening.

57.18 Councillor Knight asked:

On your tables, some of you will have already seen, some photographs. These are not from Rochdale, but from Moulsecoomb, and were all taken within the last few weeks. Imagine if this was your home, this is the reality of far too many residents in my ward and across the city. Collectively we are the landlords of these properties, I cannot be the only in the room ashamed of that and we now know beyond doubt that this mould contributed to the death of a two-year-old boy. In 2021, the Housing Ombudsman reported that in cases of mould there was an overreliance being placed on the contribution of a tenant's lifestyle. Even Rochdale Borough Housing accepts the focus needs to be on prevention rather than cure with all the valued judgements attached to that. Awaab Ishak died in 2020 from damp caused by normal daily living activities and there was no evidence that the families lifestyle was excessive. Brighton and Hove City Council are also too willing to blame tenants for the situations that they find themselves in. This is now literally a matter of life and death. My question is this, and while I ask my question I'm going to hold up some pictures for some of you to see. What lessons have

been learned since that inquest result, what are we doing differently as a council? How have our priorities changed since we found out the result? I want to know from Housing what we are doing for poor souls who's shoes look like this and who's bathroom looks like this. This one, by the way, is not a Moulsecoomb lavatory you'll be pleased to hear. This is the lavatory in the flat of the little boy who died.

57.19 Councillor Hugh-Jones replied:

Thank you, you asked what we started doing since the inquest and the answer is Housing Repairs & Maintenance Services have transferred painting staff working on discretionary decoration schemes to work on dampness and condensation for the foreseeable future to increase the number of damp washdown and paint completed. 57.20 Additional contractor resource has been engaged to support the damp team with washdowns focusing on reducing the backlog. This has been taken forward and initial works have been issues. We've engaged a damp surveyor to provide additional Technical Support in more complex cases and we've engaged specialist damp contractors to deal with remedial works on more complex cases and we'll be working with the damp surveyor to develop a risk assessment to help evaluate cases and operatives are being asked to be much more proactive about reporting any concerns they have about mould and damp when they attend properties. In the medium to long term, the solution is a continuous improvement in the standard of housing stock and ensuring that we remove barriers to engage with services to report issues. It's a pity that I've only seen these pictures now and that you've chosen not to share them with me beforehand. When we know about these issues, we can do something about them. For me, the cases I'm most worried about are the ones that we're not getting reported. I think it's great that Michael Gove has woken up to this issue after decades of underfunding to Social Housing and if the Government had made the sustained and adequate commitment to properly insulating homes across the country, we'd be in a very different place. In terms of asset management there will be particular emphasis on improvement to property insulation, window installation and mechanical ventilation. We're reviewing our capital programme and are likely to be increasing our investment in damp and condensation measures as well as overall investment in planned works. Do you have a supplementary?

57.20 Councillor Knight asked a supplementary question:

I will say to you, I didn't share the photographs with you but I did share them completely with all the members of the Housing Team, so people working for the council have all seen these pictures and the fact that you imply you didn't know anything about examples like this speaks volumes to me. What I would like to say is can the Chair of Housing please provide details of any meetings there have been between the Chief Executive, the legal team and the Director of Housing and the administration since that inquest finding because as members we need to be reassured that actually this matter is being afforded the gravity it deserves, and that should come from the Chief Executive right the way through the whole organisation. If you could confirm that those meetings have taken place, and if not, would you consider please involving the most senior management of this council in this work?

57.21 Councillor Hugh-Jones replied:

I'm getting regular updates from Rachel Sharpe, the Director of Housing Communities & Neighbourhoods, and from Martin Reid, the Assistant Director for Housing Management. We've not involved the Executive Directors so far but at this stage I've been reassured

that the council is taking all the necessary measures. If it becomes necessary to involve the Executive Director then we'll look at that, but for the moment I got a very full response from Martin Reid which I can share with you by email because it was far too long to read out. What I've read now is some of the highlights so if you want to read and digest that and come back to me with anything you think we've missed I'd welcome that.

57.22 Councillor Nemeth asked:

This is an extremely friendly question on a topic that is close to many of our hearts. I received so many lovely messages following the death of our dear friend, and certainly my mentor, Cllr Gary Peltzer-Dunn, as did Gary's wife Chip from all corners of the chamber in recognition of his inspirational contribution to council life spanning 51 years. Would the Leader of the Council and administration back the creation of a fitting memorial, perhaps the naming after Gary of a building or street or a prominent section of the Kingsway to the Sea project such as the park and would you be willing to meet with me and Gary's wife chip to take such an idea forward?

57.23 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied:

Basically, yes, of course. We have to have a fitting way to remember Cllr Peltzer-Dunn and I've already raised it with the Executive Director independent from the question before us today. We were indeed thinking about Kingsway to the Sea as a potential location for something there is some of the potential use of the artistic contribution from the Section 106 contributions and bought what I would say, and this would be the most fitting way to remember Gary, would be of course we need to have a bit more detail and will need to accurately follow the finance and have much more details so that we can get this done right, but yes.

57.24 Councillor Nemeth said:

I don't have a supplementary, but I thank Cllr Mac Cafferty for the answer. Thank you.

57.25 Councillor Pissaridou asked:

You will recall earlier this year, subject to my subsequent raising of concerns to council how delighted my residents were that the proposed move to move Mile Oak library into the designated snooker room at Portslade Sport Centre, currently now run by Freedom Leisure, would not go ahead. We were very pleased with that, however, further to this decision I understand from a report to the TECC Committee that Freedom Leisure is now experiencing dire financial difficulties and the decision was made at P&R to review their contract. Portslade Sport Centre has served our Portslade local community for almost 50 years and has been extended several times. It is not only an essential part of health, physical and mental, and wellbeing of Portslade local residents, it's also used as a gym by 1,000 of the PACA school pupils. Will the council take this into account in any mitigated measures it may be considering? Thank you.

57.26 Councillor Osborne replied:

Thank you for the question and yes of course we very much value the sports centre of Portslade and any decisions that will be made will be considered with demand and usage. There currently are some plans just to tweak the times around Christmas and then there was the report that went to TECC Committee which was suggesting some changes around energy efficiency, but there's currently no bigger plans to cut any hours or to change any of the service so it will be currently staying as it is. Just to mention the

original point that you mentioned about the library, again there's no plans about that and if there was you would be the first person to know about them.

57.27 Councillor Pissaridou asked a supplementary question:

Thank you, Cllr Osborne, that's very reassuring. Portslade Sports Centre was built on Portslade Community College campus which is now PACA of course, and the C in both stands for 'Community'. It is the only space in my ward with facilities available for all residents young and old, and over the years it has not only been used for sports but also holiday activities plus a range of family events, carol concerts and even the annual New Years Eve celebrations. Can the council reassure me that, in future, my Portslade local residents may continue to welcome in many more new years in their sports centre?

57.28 Councillor Osborne replied:

I would hope that the answer is yes. Obviously if there is any changes to any times or any plans they will come through Committees and the decision making bodies in the council, but there is no decision or changes that are being proposed and as I say, consultation with the community would have to happen and with the ward councillors before anything would change.

57.29 Councillor McNair asked:

Many trees have been lost in Patcham and of course throughout the city due to disease, are the locations of trees lost to disease routinely passed onto the tree planting officer and will the trees be automatically replaced?

57.30 Councillor Davis replied:

I'm really sorry to hear about this and I'm sure you understand that the arbs team as well are incredibly sorry to see the loss of trees. There was a tree lost in Tongdean Lane last week and genuinely the arbs team had tears in their eyes cutting this down, and I'm sure as a chamber we feel equally since this is beyond politics. I don't have a direct answer to your question, but I'd happily talk to you via email or if you'd like to contact me we'll get together. Do you have a supplementary?

57.31 Councillor McNair asked a supplementary question:

Thank you, Patcham I believe has had a number of trees illegally felled as I'm sure the city has as a whole. Do you agree that we should use the full use of the law when trees are removed without the council's approval?

57.32 Councillor Davis replied:

Alistair, absolutely. I do know that previously this administration has prosecuted for that, and if you've got locations please report that. I would happily work with you to enforce that to the full level that we could. Thank you.

57.33 Councillor Fishleigh asked:

What are the council's plans for the land it owns to the North and South of the gasworks site including the disused footbridge from the A259 bus stop?

57.34 Councillor Hugh-Jones replied:

Thank you for your question, there are currently no plans for these sites and if any come forward they'd need to be reviewed and options looked at.

- 57.35 Councillor Fishleigh asked a supplementary question:
That's quite a peculiar answer, I've asked about these plots of council owned land several times before as they are prime real estate which should be used for Housing. The options are: the council keeps and develops for social housing, the council sells to the developer and ensures that social and/or affordable housing is built there or the council does nothing. Why has the council chosen the do nothing option for this site?
- 57.36 Councillor Hugh-Jones replied:
The site is very constrained, the North one's at a lower level and the South one has difficult access and we would need to be seen alongside access to the Marina which is really complex.
- 57.37 Councillor Bagaeen asked:
We are seeing an increase in issues with motorcycles using inappropriate or illegal cut throughs across the city, primarily by delivery motorcycles from various countries. We have tried as a council and Cllr Davis and I have spoken about this. We have tried to engage with some of the lead suppliers but it's proving difficult due to the way individual riders are self-employed. Can I ask Cllr Davis, please, if there is a plan in place on account of recent motorcycles cutting through the Aldrington Tunnel at school time putting children in danger whether there is a plan to monitor the situation in the tunnel as it currently operates?
- 57.38 Councillor Hills replied:
The tunnel obviously previously there were barriers up there and that stopped the motorcyclists cutting through and about 18 months ago there was a request from Pedal People to have those removed to get better access for disabled people and sensible cyclists. For anyone who doesn't know, Pedal People are a brilliant charity providing cycle rides to elderly people and people living with disability who have health challenges. It was their request to have them removed. I did look this up and apparently there haven't been any injuries or collisions reported to the council since the removal of the barriers, I'm not saying that means the tunnel is completely safe and we did recently get a letter complaining that motorcycles have been using the tunnel as a cut through. It's a police matter so we'd like to urge residents to contact the police if they see the tunnel being used this way because they're doing it illegally but we can speak to officers and see if there's anything further we can do. If you want to send a request through we can see what we can do to deter motorcyclists from breaking the law and using the tunnel in that way.
- 57.39 Councillor Bagaeen asked a supplementary question:
I appreciate the things about the police, but I think council created this problem and I think council should be a part of the solution. Might we put something physical in place to prevent motorcycles cutting through, particularly at school time, while trying to maintain access for wider cycles, wheelchairs, and pushchairs at the same time?
- 57.40 Councillor Hills replied:
Thank you very much for the question. It's a really tricky one, what that something might be would probably be my question to you so I guess we just have to pick up on that conversation and see if is anything possible because we have to act within the

Equalities Act and make sure that the access is maintained for those in need, but I can also see some problems so let's carry on with that conversation.

57.41 Councillor Robins asked:

Recently, RPM Trust staff were told that leavers would not be paid back pay in respect to the changes in pay grades. This, they were told, was consistent with the approach taken by Brighton and Hove City Council. Can you confirm that it is the case that Brighton and Hove City Council will not be paying leavers back pay in respect to the pay grades that have been awarded?

57.42 Councillor Shanks replied:

I hope to answer this because I'm a member of the Royal Pavilion Museums trust, as is Cllr Robins, so I think it might be good to ask the Chief Executive of the Museums Trust. This is something I did ask him, and it is something that is still, I think, in discussion. It's possible that this is about whether the staff who have left the organisation will get paid for the period of the working here. The arrangements for this are being finalised apparently, so it sounds like it will be. That's as much as I can tell you unless you want to go back to the trust, because it's now a trust.

57.43 Councillor Robins asked a follow-up question:

I'm not asking about the RPM, I'm just putting the question in context that the RPM trust were told that this was consistent with Brighton and Hove City Council's approach and I'm asking whether that is in fact Brighton and Hove City Council's approach.

57.44 Councillor Shanks replied:

I'm very sorry, I don't know the answer to that question, I can find it out. The subject matter of the question said it was about the Royal Pavilion Museum's trust, but we will get you the answer to that question.

57.45 Councillor Robins asked a supplementary question:

If you give me a written answer that it is Brighton and Hove City Council's policy not to pay leavers back pay could you give me some idea of the number of members of staff that that would involve.

57.46 Councillor Shanks replied:

I'm sure we can add that to the question that we ask from our HR department, thank you.

57.47 Councillor Lewry asked:

Thank you, Madame Mayor. I would like to bring to your attention the dangerous dog policy but there's been some big problems with dog attacks in Hangleton & Knoll recently including an incident that caused a serious facial injury to a resident. The police have been informed as have the council, however the council has yet to reply to the emails from residents regarding this incident that was sent out several weeks ago. The situation is causing much concern in the local community which wants to see action from the council and also to be reassured that something is going to be done. Can the Chair outline what the council's policy is on dangerous dogs and provide information on how long residents can expect to wait for a response to incidents?

57.48 Councillor Davis replied:

Obviously, I'm really sorry to hear that appalling story. I will say that investigating dangerous dogs is either the responsibility or the local authority and what that depends on is the severity of the case. By the sounds of the severity of your case, obviously this has to be investigated by the police and once the police investigate it it is taken away from the local authority. I am happy to write on behalf to chase this up and I'm really sorry to hear this but once it becomes a serious issue it has to go by the police. I'm happy to take a supplementary.

57.49 Councillor Lewry asked a supplementary question:

Can I ask I the Chair will meet me to discuss this issue as soon as it's convenient to yourself so that we can provide some reassurance for our local residents in Hangleton & Knoll.

57.50 Councillor Davis replied:

Nick, I'm always happy to be a visitor to Hangleton so if you email me I'll be out there. Thank you.

57.51 Councillor Grimshaw asked:

This is my question on the lack of appropriate disability advocacy. For advocacy in Brighton & Hove, people are signposted to the Sussex Advocacy Partnership which includes around 8 organisations. A disabled resident of Gardner Street has advised me that only impact initiatives are suitable for her, but this has time limited advocacy which is quickly used up for people in her type of situation. She currently has only one telephone call of advocacy left and must reapply and go back in the waiting list. Would the chair of TECC agree that it could be a really useful way forward for advocacy provision to be attached to council policy that will affect disabled people and should be considered an essential service to enable inclusivity as this is especially important in relation to safeguarding as those needing advocacy can often not simply meet with people or attend meetings in the way others can do. Thank you.

51.52 Councillor Powell replied:

Thank you, Cllr Grimshaw, for your question. As you've rightly highlighted, there is the Sussex Advocacy Partnership that comprises a number of groups, mental health through MIND, LGBT and trans advocacy through Mind Out, those with learning disabilities through Speak Out and bilingual advocacy for those whose first language isn't English is through the Sussex Interpreting Services. There's also an advocacy service for those with Autism and Asperger's delivered by Impact Advocacy. The resident you're referring to I've also been in touch with, if that person doesn't fall into any of these categories then obviously ask them to contact us again and we'll direct them accordingly. Thank you.

54.53 Councillor Grimshaw asked a supplementary question:

Thank you very much, Cllr Powell. It is the same resident we're speaking of and she believes she has only one advocacy route to follow, so does the chair of TECC agree that introducing a road closure on Gardner Street, which effectively places at least one vulnerable disabled resident under house arrest from 11am to 6pm every single day which prevents them from being able to access their essential medical care or indeed take up their rightful place in the community and further prevents your own ward

residents and constituents who are amongst 13 and a half thousand blue badge holders from being able to park and access this vibrant part of the city. It is in fact a contravention of the Equalities Act 2010, our public sector equalities duties and falls woefully short of these corporate plans and values. Will you individually prove your commitment today to those blue badge holders in your ward and demand that Gardner Street decision is revoked and the actions leading up to it are forensically and transparently examined through the council's own values and the equalities lens. Thank you.

57.54 Councillor Powell replied:

I'll just correct you if I may, Cllr Grimshaw, Gardner Street is not in my ward. First of all I will say to you that I have been informed that the council took due regard to its own legal responsibilities by thoroughly reporting the scheme and the results of this consultation to its ETS Committee, including a further Part Two report to consider the individual needs of the resident of whom you speak, and as I have already said, I have also been in touch with them. I was informed by ETS officers and the ETS chair that compromises were made to modify the scheme following the consultation, including a reduction to the closure hours, creation of a wide and clear dedicated marked walkway in the centre of the road free from obstructions such as tables, chairs a-boards and others that cause difficulties for people with disabilities and that an additional 9 dedicated blue badge bays were created in the adjacent Regent Street for Blue Badge holders, and that pickup points remain possible at the entrance and exit to the street. The Head of Equalities and Communities is meeting with the Head of Transport in the coming weeks to have a conversation of learning regarding the Gardner Street decision and as you know, the council have launched the accessibility city strategy and as such, all departments have identified that improving engagement is one of their main priority actions. Going forward, once the accessibility strategy is agreed at committee, officers will be doing a piece of work bringing all the directorates together to work on improving engagement with disabled people, and you have my word that improving such engagement is an absolute priority. Thank you.

58 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

58.1 Councillor Allbrooke introduced, and formally moved the report.

58.2 Councillor McNair and Appich spoke on the matter.

58.3 Councillor Allbrooke responded to the debate.

58.4 The Mayor then put the recommendations as detailed in the report listed in the agenda to the vote which was carried. The Conservative Group voted against.

RESOLVED:

That Council:

(i) Approved the proposed changes referred to in paragraph 2.1

That Policy & Resources Committee and Full Council:

(ii) Authorised the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary or incidental for the implementation of the changes agreed by the Policy & Resources

Committee and by Full Council, and authorised the Monitoring Officer to amend and re-publish the Council's constitutional documents to incorporate the changes.

(iii) Agreed that the proposed changes come into force immediately following their approval by Policy & Resources Committee or by Full Council, as appropriate.

59 SUSSEX HEALTH & CARE: THE SUSSEX HEALTH & CARE ASSEMBLY FINAL TERMS OF REFERENCE AND THE SUSSEX INTEGRATED CARE STRATEGY

59.1 Councillor Shanks introduced, and formally moved the report.

59.2 Councillor Moonan, Bell and Janio spoke on the matter.

59.3. Councillor Shanks responded to the debate.

59.4 The Mayor then put the recommendations as detailed in the report listed in the agenda to the vote which was carried.

RESOLVED:

That Council agreed the Terms of Reference for the Sussex Health & Care Assembly (Appendix 1).

Noted the Sussex Integrated Care Strategy: Improving Lives Together (Appendix 2); and noted that Improving Lives Together has been considered and noted by the ICS Member Working Group (Appendix 3).

60 PROTECTING THE CITY'S TREES

60.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Fishleigh on behalf of Independent Councillors and formally seconded by Councillor Janio.

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

60.3 Councillor Theobald, Moonan and Littman spoke in favour of the motion.

60.4 Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she would not accept the amendment.

60.5 The Mayor then put the Green Group amendment to the vote which was carried. The Conservative Group voted for the amendment.

60.6 The Mayor then put the following motion as amended to the vote:

“This Council notes that:

1. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) were introduced in 1947 as a tool for local authorities to use to protect individual trees and woodland in the interests of preserving the amenity those trees provide to the area.

2. If a tree is protected by a TPO then it is a criminal offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, damage or destroy that tree without the written consent of the local planning authority, and this extends to the cutting of the tree's roots.
3. Anyone found guilty of wilfully destroying a protected tree, or wilfully damaging that tree in a way that is likely to destroy it, may be fined up to £20,000 in the Magistrates Court and, in serious cases, they may go to the Crown Court, where the potential fine is unlimited and that this record was first tested thanks to action from a Brighton and Hove City Councillor

This Council agrees that:

4. We should use the full force of the law when trees with TPOs are removed without BHCC's permission.

This Council therefore resolves to request:

5. A report to-TECC Committee which outlines
 - a. Details on the council's and national planning policy in relation to trees with TPOs that are removed without BHCC's permission and lawful conditions the council can make on applications regarding trees;
 - b. A draft communications plan for residents and developers to support the Council's enforcement approach."

60.7 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried. The Conservative Group voted for the motion.

61 MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

61.1 The Joint Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Appich on behalf of the Labour and Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Shanks.

61.2 The Mayor noted that there was an amendment in relation to this motion as set out in the addendum papers.

61.3 Councillor Fishleigh moved an amendment on behalf of Independent Councillors which was formally seconded by Councillor Janio.

61.4 Councillor Brown and Shanks spoke in favour of the motion.

61.5 Councillor Appich confirmed that she would not accept the amendment

61.6 The Mayor then put the Independent Councillors amendment to the vote which was lost. The Conservative Group voted for the amendment.

61.7 The Mayor then put the following motion to the vote:

This council:

1. Notes the demand on mental health services outlined in the Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment [1] which highlights that the demands on and levels of need for mental health services in Brighton & Hove is high compared to England, in the case of children and young people, as well as working age adults and older adults
2. declares its recognition of a local and national mental health emergency
3. recognises the Brighton & Hove Citizens campaign and commits to work in partnership to ensure the voices of young people and marginalised communities are included in every step of the work to address the mental health emergency

Therefore, resolves to:

4. Request the chief executive writes to the Education Secretary requesting resources to better equip education providers to deal with the challenges of poor mental health for students, teachers and staff;
5. Request a report be brought to Health and Wellbeing Board which:
 - a. explores the options for rolling out school and college-based counselling across the city
 - b. receives an update on funding committed at Budget Council in February on mental health first aid training
6. Request a report to Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee which:
 - a. calls for greater collaboration between NHS and other public services including council and police
 - b. sets out what training is and can be provided to frontline public services including education providers, police and the community and voluntary sector
 - c. sets out a plan for regular reports back to the committee
 - d. outlines local Mental Health Emergency Response Service provision and recommends improvements

61.8 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried. The Conservative Group voted for the motion.

62 PROTECT RENTERS THIS WINTER: STOP REVENGE EVICTIONS!

62.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Williams on behalf of the Labour Group and formally seconded by Councillor Allcock.

62.2 The Mayor noted that there were two amendments in relation to this motion as set out in the addendum papers.

62.3 Councillor Gibson moved the first amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Osborne.

62.4 Councillor Meadows moved the second amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Nemeth.

62.5 Councillor Pissaridou, Knight and Janio spoke on the matter.

- 62.6 Councillor Williams confirmed that she would not accept the amendments.
- 62.7 The Mayor then put the Conservative Group amendment to the vote which was lost. The Conservative Group voted for the motion.
- 62.8 The Mayor then put the Green Group amendment to the vote which was carried. The Conservative Group abstained from the vote on of the motion.
- 62.9 The Mayor then put the following motion to the vote:

“Council notes:

1. This Winter’s cost-of-living emergency and dangers to tenants in properties with health hazards i.e. damp, mould, excess cold;
2. The tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak from prolonged exposure to mould;
3. Mould, damp and serious disrepair in the social and private housing sectors needs addressing;
4. Action the council can take to prevent revenge evictions, raise standards and deter landlords from breaking the law;
5. The council has legal powers to preempt revenge evictions by issuing ‘improvement notices ahead of any s21 notice’;
6. The 2019 High Court ruling in favour of Hull City Council
7. The high levels of rent in Brighton & Hove [1]
8. The leader of the council wrote to DHLUC last week demanding the government take action to support renters in the city, by calling for an increase to the benefits and their cap, a reintroduction on temporary ban of evictions until at least March 2024 and an introduction of a rent-freeze as per the measures introduced by the Scottish Government

Council therefore:

a) requests officers to bring a report to Housing Committee

- Reviewing the council’s private sector housing enforcement policy to reduce tenants’ risk of ‘revenge evictions’ by serving ‘improvement notices’ and ‘emergency remedial action notices’ at the soonest opportunity.
- outlining plans to display on the council website steps private renters can take regarding repairs requests and revenge eviction notice

b) requests the Chief Executive write to Michael Gove

- Urging him to bring forward primary legislation banning revenge evictions or devolving the power to do so in Brighton & Hove to the local authority
- Requesting the phasing out of short-term tenancy agreements of six months
- Encouraging him to follow the example set by the Welsh Senedd and adopt legislation protecting renters from eviction for the first 12 months of their tenancy
- urging the provision of powers for local authorities to control rents in areas, like Brighton and Hove, where they have become unaffordable.”

- 62.10 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been Caried. The Conservative Group abstained from the vote on the motion.

63 UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN ABANDONED IN LOCAL HOTELS

- 63.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Sankey on behalf of the Labour Group and formally seconded by Councillor Grimshaw.
- 63.2 Councillor Allbrooke moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Powell.
- 63.3 Councillor Brown spoke on the matter.
- 63.4 Councillor Sankey confirmed that she would not accept the amendment.
- 63.5 The Mayor then put the Green Group amendment to the vote which was lost. The Conservative Group voted against the amendment.
- 63.6 The Mayor then put the following motion to the vote:

“Council notes:

1. In July 2021 the Home Office began contracting with hotel owners in Brighton & Hove and elsewhere to house asylum-seeking children;
2. Alarming reports that at least 222 unaccompanied children placed by the Home Office in hotels nationally – many in Brighton & Hove – have gone missing;
3. The Home Office has a mandatory statutory duty under section 55 of the Borders Act 2009 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK;
4. Local authorities have mandatory statutory duties under the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need within their area;
5. The mandatory National Transfer Scheme is intended to promptly transfer unaccompanied children, on their arrival in the UK, to statutory local authority care;

Council requests:

6. The Chief Executive writes to the Home Secretary: asking for explanation of the legal basis upon which they are moving unaccompanied asylum seeking children outside of the local authority area of their arrival in the UK into hotels in Brighton & Hove being used as “intake centers” , and provide legal clarity about whether the Home Office accepts responsibility of ‘corporate parent’ for the “children placed in those “intake centers”
7. requesting an urgent meeting with the Home Office to discuss the welfare needs of and adequate funding for unaccompanied children
8. A report or briefing to the next CYPS meeting to clarify:

- a. At what point in the process Brighton and Hove City Council is informed by the Home Office that a child is being transferred out of area to a hotel or “extension of an intake center” located by the HO in Brighton and Hove
- b. What specific steps are being taken to safeguard children once officers are made aware of their arrival”

63.7 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried. The Conservative Group abstained from the vote on the motion.

64 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT OVERSPEND

64.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Meadows on behalf of the Conservative Group and formally seconded by Councillor Barnett.

64.2 Councillor Gibson, Williams, Janio and Barnett spoke on the matter.

64.3 The Mayor then put the following motion to the vote:

“This Council:

1. Notes that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is made up from Council tenants’ rents;
2. Raises concern over reports that the HRA is overspent by over £1 million; and

Therefore, resolves to:

3. Calls for a detailed Officer Report into how and why this unprecedented situation has arisen.”

64.4 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been lost. The Conservative Group voted for the motion.

65 CYCLE HANGARS

65.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Nemeth on behalf of the Conservative Group and formally seconded by Councillor Bagaeen.

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

65.3 Councillor Allbrooke, Janio and Bagaeen spoke on the matter.

65.4 Councillor Nemeth confirmed that he would accept the amendment.

65.5 The Mayor then put the following motion as amended to the vote:

This Council:

1. Notes unfavourable national press coverage of the roll-out of the Council's cycle hangar scheme
2. Expresses concern over the use of the Budget process, rather than a standard Officer Report at Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee, to implement the scheme; thereby avoiding scrutiny of financial, legal and equality issues and numerous other related matters;
3. Expresses concern at reports from residents that workers who installed the cycle hangars were advised by council staff to "call the police immediately if there was any trouble" in response to residents politely sharing concerns;
4. Notes the lack of consultation that has taken place with residents over hangar locations; and

Therefore, resolves to:

5. Calls for an Officer Report detailing all elements of the cycle hangar scheme, to include details of the exact criteria used to accept or decline cycle hangar placements.

65.6 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried. The Conservative Group voted for the motion.

66 COST OF LIVING - BUSINESS AND COMMUNITIES

66.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Osborne on behalf of the Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Hugh-Jones.

66.2 The Mayor noted that there were two amendments in relation to this motion as set out in the addendum papers.

66.3 Councillor Evans moved the first amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Robins.

66.4 Councillor McNair moved the second amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Bell.

66.5 Councillor Robins spoke on the matter.

66.6 Councillor Osborne confirmed that he would accept the Labour amendment.

66.7 The Mayor then put the Conservative Group amendment to the vote which was lost. The Conservative Group voted for the amendment.

66.8 The Mayor then put the following motion as amended to the vote:

This council notes:

1. Rising costs and inflation have negatively impacted businesses, third sector organisations, and the public sector in the city [1][2] and that in October, Council agreed to declare a cost-of-living emergency and hold a cost-of-living emergency summit

2. That after Brexit and the continuing covid-19 pandemic, the costs and challenges of running businesses and organisations in the city are even greater, particularly due to labour shortages [3]
3. Small businesses are more likely to be harder hit by these difficulties and need more support, and that many may not be aware of the limited support that is available to them

And further recognises:

4. Recent lobbying letters agreed at the Policy & Resources Committee in October which outlines the need for support for SMEs in Brighton & Hove from Government including calling for the reduction of tourism VAT to 5% and dedicated businesses grant support
5. The local #GiveltBack campaign which marks an act of solidarity, for the first time in the city, demanding a reversal of cuts to local services and local government worker pay. [4]

Therefore, the Council resolves to:

6. Recognise and thank small businesses in Brighton & Hove for the positive impact they have despite challenging circumstances, and better communicate with them on the support they can seek (including grants, business rates relief, information and advice on energy bills and limited government support such as the Covid Recovery Loan Scheme), with signposting on the council website, social media channels and direct communications with businesses
7. Reaffirm the Council commitment to work closely with businesses directly, alongside the Chamber of Commerce and other business networking organisations and Community Works, to identify any issues businesses and organisations are facing
8. Support the Local Government Association 'Save our Services' campaign to push the Government to secure adequate funding for local authorities in line with inflation
9. Identify funding within the budget-setting process for 2023-24 to make support for small businesses a priority

66.9 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried. The Conservative Group voted against the motion.

67 CLIMATE EMERGENCY FOUR YEARS ON

67.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Hills on behalf of the Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Littman.

67.2 The Mayor noted that there were three amendments in relation to this motion as set out in the addendum papers.

67.3 Councillor Appich moved the first amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Evans.

- 67.4 Councillor Fishleigh moved the second amendment on behalf of Independent Councillors which was formally seconded by Councillor Janio.
- 67.5 Councillor Bagaeen moved the third amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Simson.
- 67.6 Councillor Janio spoke in favour of the motion.
- 67.7 Councillor Hills confirmed that she would accept the Labour amendment.
- 67.8 The Mayor then put the Conservative Group amendment to the vote which was lost. The Conservative Group voted for the amendment.
- 67.9 The Mayor then put the Independent Councillors to the vote which was lost. The Conservative Group abstained from the vote on the amendment.
- 67.10 The Mayor then put the following motion as amended to the vote:

This council notes:

1. The city council declared a climate and biodiversity emergency in December 2018 [1]
2. That following dramatic weather events over the autumn, it is clear that climate change isn't just coming – it is here and has already had an impact on the city such as with localised flooding.
3. The council's cross-party Carbon Neutral Programme's focus on Carbon Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Conserving & Enhancing Biodiversity and the annual report showing our performance [2]
4. Information made available on the council website on the action being taken on the climate and biodiversity emergency, including the recent annual report (Link: [Appendix 1 Annual Report 2021-22 FINAL covers.pdf \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#))
5. The work of the Brighton Chamber to encouraging business to become net zero champions and the work of the council in collaboration with partners in the Greater Brighton region, such as through the Greater Brighton Economic Board, in tackling the climate crisis [3]

Therefore, resolves to request:

6. The Chief Executive to write to businesses and third sector organisations in the city, highlighting:-
 - (a) The Council's actions to address the climate and biodiversity emergency;
 - (b) That the council contributes less than 2% of the city's carbon emissions and advertising the support available to businesses to cut transport emissions, such as the e-cargo bike accelerator project
7. The Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for environment, food and rural affairs asking them to provide further funding to councils, businesses and third sector organisations to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergency,

calling upon the government to publish a full set of environmental performance indicators and to grant local authorities more powers to intervene in the public transport sector and force private operators to bring down bus and rail fares in order to make public transport more affordable and accessible

8. Council reaffirms its commitment to delivering the full suite of measures recommended by the city's first ever climate assembly, including the introduction of a park and ride scheme.

67.11 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been carried. The Conservative Group voted against the motion.

68 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting concluded at 9.53

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2022