

Brighton & Hove Sustainable Communities Act proposals – comparison with the Coalition Government’s policy paper, ‘Our Programme for Government’

1.1 The table below compares the proposals submitted by Brighton & Hove City Council in response to round one of the Act with recent policy statements from the new Government. This does not mean that a proposal will necessarily be implemented but indicates where national thinking is proposing action on similar issues to those that have been put forward locally.

Sustainable Communities Act proposal	Policy statement(s)
1. That the council is given the power to offer discretionary business rate relief to encourage and sustain small and medium local businesses.	“We will find a practical way to make small business rate relief automatic”. (Page 10) A separate announcement in the Budget that small business rate relief will be increased and extend for 1 year
2. That legislation is changed to allow allotment holders to sell their surplus produce to local businesses.	The LGA has approached the council to seek its views on separate changes proposed to allotment legislation by CLG
3. That food growing, either on or off school sites, be introduced as part of the national curriculum	This proposal was not short listed by the LGA
4. That national planning policy, specifically planning policy statement 1 is changed to explicitly support localised food systems.	No related statement
5. That the legal restriction that prevents councils which own housing to borrow against the Housing Revenue Account (rent) is removed.	“We will phase out the ring-fencing of grants to local government and review the unfair Housing Revenue Account”. (Page 12)
6. That legislation is amended to release existing and accumulated capital receipts from the sale of council housing to councils to build new affordable housing or invest in existing affordable housing.	“We will phase out the ring-fencing of grants to local government and review the unfair Housing Revenue Account”. (Page 12)
7. That the installation and use of renewable energy by households is	“We will establish a full system of feed-in tariffs in electricity – as well as

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<p>made more accessible and affordable.</p>	<p>the maintenance of banded Renewables Obligation Certificates”. (Page 16)</p> <p>“We will encourage community-owned renewable energy schemes where local people benefit from the power produced. We will also allow communities that host renewable energy projects to keep the additional business rates they generate”. (Page 17)</p>
<p>8. That the council is given the power to set vehicle speed limits on public roads at any maximum below existing regulations, according to local needs.</p>	<p>No related statement</p>
<p>9. That legislation is introduced that requires supermarkets –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce their use of food packing that is non-recyclable; • To provide recycling facilities for plastic not recycled by the council; • To ensure that the plastic is recycled or, where this is not practicable, to bear the cost of treating it as landfill waste. 	<p>“We will introduce honesty in food labelling so that consumers can be confident about where their food comes from and its environmental impact”. (Page 13)</p> <p>“We will work towards a ‘zero waste’ economy, encourage councils to pay people to recycle, and work to reduce littering”. (Page 17)</p>

2.2. In addition, the Government paper pledges to give local councils the general power of competence (page 12). This will enable councils, where there is not prohibitive legislation to the contrary, to carry out any activity so long as there is a demonstrable benefit to the community, where previously they would have required specific legislative permission to do so.

2.3. Page numbers in this appendix refer to the relevant pages in the Coalition document which can be found at the following web-link:
<http://programmeforgovernment.hmg.gov.uk/files/2010/05/coalition-programme.pdf>