

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

10.00am 17 JANUARY 2012

ROOM 126, KING'S HOUSE

MINUTES

Present: Hazelgrove (Chair)

Also in attendance: Bojczuk, Brown, Carden, Eyles, Steer, Terry, Tonks and Vincent

Other Members present: McCabe (Chair of Age Concern), Robertson (Pensioner's Association), Howley (Pensioner Action)

PART ONE

9. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

9.1 There were no apologies or declarations of interest.

10. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING 13 DECEMBER 2011 AND MATTERS ARISING

10.1 The minutes were agreed.

10.2 Matters arising –

Item 3.1- Colin Vincent spoke to Philip Letchfield on the Local Account revised document. The final draft had been approved at the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and would go onto Cabinet. It was agreed to have the Local Account scheduled into the OPC's future work programme.

Item 3.2 - Colin Vincent had requested information on the age groups of people that had used St. Patrick's. Churches were collaboratively piloting a scheme called "Anti freeze" for a one month during the coldest period. This would be reviewed.

11. PROPOSED BUDGET

11.1 Mark Ireland - Head of Strategic Finance & Procurement, James Hengeveld - Head of Finance Integrated Financial Management & Planning and Brian Doughty – Head of Adults Assessment (HoAA) presented the budget information and answered questions.

11.2 Officers talked through a presentation which included what services did the council provide in 2011 and 2012, how were council services funded, what did the money get spent on, 2011/12 to 2014 savings projections, where the 2012/2013 proposed savings

were being made, Council tax increase or freeze and Budget setting - what happened next.

11.3 Members asked the following questions which included:

1. How was the Council going to deliver the increase in assessments as older people were living longer? Members were told that the Council has the responsibility to assess eligible need then to purchase or organise services to meet that need this would mean that the Council would need to buy more services in, to meet the increased demand. It was noted that the Council were not changing the eligibility criteria.
2. Whether there was going to be less money spent on older people? There was going to be a small growth in the budget although Members were advised that as older people preferred to stay in their homes longer, this would lead to more innovative care within homes, better use of housing and technology.
3. Further clarification was required on the individual cost of £100k, for a looked after child seemed very high. Members were told that this was an average figure as some costs were lower as these children went into adoption services; however some were far higher due to some children having complex needs.

There was a discussion around Brighton and Hove having the second highest looked after children (LAC) figures in the country, (there were approximately 420 LAC in the city). Ofsted had confirmed that the thresholds were correct. Children's services were focussing on early prevention.

4. Due to an increase in older people and a reduction in funding, would this result in a budget overspend? As older people went into independent living could this lead to more emergency care? Were all budget items being scrutinised as there was a 1% reduction in white lining of roads compared to a 6% reduction in re-enabling older people's services? Members were advised that this was a complex area as older people moved into more independent living. Members questioned whether there was a significant drive being made to find other savings, as it came across as if the carbon budget was more favourable than a moral budget.

Members were told that there were savings being made in this financial year to put towards the overall expected 2012-14 savings. Support services would be developed to ensure housing was appropriate to the users needs.

Clarification was given on the white lining of roads which was a £20K- £30k saving.

5. Whether the Council were making savings from the use of consultants; as this work could be completed in house, attendances at conferences and the value of free parking to councillors. Members heard how there were significant controls in place on the use of consultants and such requests would have to be approved by the Chief Executive. There was a freeze on attending courses. Parking bays were offered to the public, outside of Full Council meetings.

6. Whether the governments extra £750 mill. of funding that was being allocated for supporting older people being discharged from hospitals would assist with increasing services for older people? Members were told how the Council received £736k of this extra funding on the 2 January, 2012 with a caveat that the money would need to be spent by April 2012. Officers were investigating whether this money could be carried over into the following year.
7. With an increase in older people staying at home the Argus had recently reported that there would be a £60k reduction in Meals on Wheels, how were the Council going to deliver this? Members were informed that the information published was misleading. The Meals on Wheels contract was currently out for tender. The demand for Meals on Wheels was declining as more choices were made available. The Council would ensure better value for money.
8. The Council's unchanged eligibility criteria would determine that the right people received the correct support. It was informed that this was the correct strategy for services.
9. Savings had been identified for bus services. Members heard how the 10% savings and increase in costs would be challenging and would need to be met.
10. The closure of some public toilets was concerning especially as 2 were in Brighton and 7 were in Hove and Portslade.

11.4 Members thanked Officers for their time.

12. IMPROVED WORKING FOR THE OPC RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 The Chair announced that a recently retired member of the public was interested in being elected onto the OPC as a Co-optee. Penny Morley wanted to put herself forward. Penny had a background in Trade Union research. Unfortunately she was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment. Members agreed for Penny to be co-opted onto the OPC.
- 12.2 Tom Hook – Head of Scrutiny presented a summary of the recommendations as set out in the last meeting by the Centre for Public Scrutiny - Expert Advisor.
- 12.3 These were:
 1. Identify a work plan with 3 or 4 key issues to focus on to influence the agenda. The Council's Forward Plan should be used to identify potential work planning ideas for the OPC.
 2. Become the statutory consultee for all older people. Utilise items on the consultation portal, agree a general approach of response at the monthly meetings.
 3. Raise the profile of the OPC by increasing it's communication to a wider audience by the further publication of letters in the Argus. One letter a month to be published by involving all members of the group. This month's letter could highlight the points raised within this budget meeting.

The development of the OPC website, to increase usage. The University can develop the website for a fee of £400 for 4 months work.

The OPC had been allocated £4k for 2011/2012 from council funding there was £900 left. The same amount of funding had been allocated for the OPC for 2012/2013.

Members agreed that the promotional stands should be upgraded and monies should be set aside for new banners. In addition to increase the circulation of posters within medical centres, doctors surgeries, community centres and supermarkets.

It was suggested that the OPC should have a column within City News.

Mike and Colin Vincent formed a marketing working group to collate promotional ideas for the OPC. Feedback of their findings would be heard at the next meeting.

4. Quarterly joint meetings with Age Concern, Pensioner Action and Pensioner's Association to ensure these meetings were well attended. Invite speakers like the Leader of the Council to give older people the opportunity to cross examine them.
5. Monthly meetings to be used to develop strategies and identify issues.
6. Governance – work is in hand to move to the Committee system. The OPC agreed to request representation at each of the committees.
7. Any work to do with the next election should be placed on hold.

13. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS, THE CHAIR, SECRETARY AND TREASURER

13.1 Francis Tonks –

- Raised the issue of the single lift in Donald Hall Road which was out of work for 3-4 months. 30% of the residents here were elderly, of which one of these residents was a wheelchair user and another had a heart condition. There were issues with carrying shopping and climbing the stairs. It was understood that the spare parts came from Europe which caused delays. Compensation vouchers had been offered to residents.

13.2 Peter Terry -

- In connection with the breakdown of lifts, 3 lifts were out of operation at Bristol Estate. The contactors had been changed and the lifts back in operation fairly quickly. There was a 10 year programme to renovate all lifts within council residencies.

13.3 Colin Vincent -

- Attended the LiNK – for the second steering group meeting and the Toilets consultative group. Colin needed someone else to attend the next meeting on the 6 Feb. Peter agreed to attend in Colin's place.

- The development of care homes- there were new contract arrangements for homes supported by the Council. The next meeting would be in March. Partners that attended this meeting included Carer's, Age UK, Alzheimer's Society and the LiNK.

13.4 Mike Bojczuk, Secretary -

- Asked whether anyone had completed the National Audit on Dementia Care and the Palliative Care Audit? Other surveys included the neighbourhood councils.

13.5 Val Brown-

- Was back from long term sickness and was aware of the survey on neighbourhood councils. Wanted to take equality and inclusion forward.

13.6 Harry Steer-

- attended the Portslade Local Action Team (LAT) which was chaired by Cllr. Penny Gilbey.
- Grey Matters was planning their future schedules.

13.7 Jack Hazelgrove –Chair

- Bus Users Group is being restructured.
- Planning to attend the Pensioner Action meeting and representing the OPC on the 13 March.
- Also would be attending the Mental Health Action Group about the closure of beds at Mill View Hospital.

14. WORK PROGRAMME

14.1 Members agreed to invite the Martlets to come and speak about their funding at the next meeting. The work programme was agreed.

The meeting concluded at 12.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of