

NOTICE OF MOTION

'BEDROOM TAX'

"This Council Notes:

From April 2013, the government is introducing a 'size criteria' which will limit how many bedrooms a family in council or social housing will receive benefit for- the so-called 'Bedroom Tax'.

If a household has more bedrooms than the Government says it needs, its Housing Benefit will be reduced: a 14% reduction in benefit for one 'spare' bedroom and a 25% reduction if a household has two or more 'spare' bedrooms.

This unjust change will affect an estimated 990 households living in accommodation owned by Brighton and Hove Council: resulting in a total reduction in Housing Benefit of some £750,000 a year.

These changes could force many households into real financial hardship, rent arrears – and ultimately, for some, homelessness. Many who are unable to prevent these outcomes may be forced to move home, in some cases away from the city.

This Council also notes the incredible work our officers and partners have been doing in preparing residents for welfare changes and acknowledges the difficult daily judgements they make to support those seeking their help.

This Council therefore condemns the 'Bedroom Tax' as an ideologically-driven attack on the least well-off in our society, and resolves to:

1. Request that the relevant Council Committee considers this motion with a view to ensuring that the Council and its partners work with all those affected by this Housing Benefit cut, and all other welfare cuts, to wherever possible prevent further expensive and socially disruptive homelessness such as through evictions;
2. Requests that the Chief Executive forward a copy of this motion to the city's three MPs, and asks them to raise the issue with Government."

