

Subject:	Ending Victim Blaming Together: Extract from the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on the 31 January 2019		
Date of Meeting:	11 March 2019		
Report of:	Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law		
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

***Action Required of the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities
Committee***

To receive the notice of motion referred from the Council for consideration.

Recommendations: That the committee receive a report detailing how the VictimFocus pledge can be fulfilled to challenge and reduce victim blaming of people who have experienced trauma, abuse or crime in our organisation.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 31 JANUARY 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER - HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Simson (Chair), Phillips (Deputy Chair), Allen, Atkinson, Barford, Bell, Bennett, Bewick, Brown, Cattell, Chapman, Cobb, Daniel, Deane, Druitt, Gibson, Greenbaum, Hamilton, Hill, Horan, Hyde, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Marsh, Meadows, Mears, Miller, Mitchell, Moonan, Morris, Nemeth, A Norman, K Norman, O'Quinn, Page, Peltzer Dunn, Platts, Robins, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wares, Wealls, West and Yates.

PART ONE

68 THE FOLLOWING NOTICES OF MOTION HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS FOR CONSIDERATION:

(2) Ending Victim Blaming Together

- 68.15 The Notice of Motion as listed on the agenda was proposed by Councillor Daniel on behalf of the Labour & Co-operative Group. She stated that she had become aware of the VictimFocus Charter Pledge and had brought the motion to full council on behalf of a leading Charity and hoped that it would be supported by all Members. She gave details of a case where a young girl became a victim and the injustice she suffered as a result and hoped that by bringing the matter to the council's attention and the signing of the pledge action could be taken to help address the situation.
- 68.16 Councillor Cattell formally seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.
- 68.17 Councillor Nemeth moved an amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group and stated that the Group was against victim blaming. However, he felt that there was a paradox for the Administration in dealing with a perceived problem in-house and how that was addressed; whilst seeking to support the Charter. Any responsible organisation had a duty to follow basic principles in relation to their staff and if the amendment was to fall he would have concerns for the council's staff.
- 68.18 Councillor Ann Norman formally seconded the amendment and thanked Councillor Daniel for bringing the motion to the council meeting. There were a number of sensible reasons as to why the council as an organisation should challenge victim blaming and ensure staff did not engage in any shape or form. She hoped that the council could ensure any such culture was not supported and that it would share knowledge and best practice with partner organisations.

68.19 Councillor Littman stated that supported the motion and noted that there was a significant bias toward victim blaming for women and girls and hoped that the Administration would reconsider proposals to cut the Domestic & Sexual Abuse Service.

68.20 Councillor Cattell stated that as a volunteer on a domestic abuse helpline she was contacted by numerous women who suffer from abuse and inevitably experience trauma, which requires specialist training to help. She fully supported the motion and hoped it would be supported unanimously.

68.21 Councillor Daniel noted the comments and sated that she could not accept the amendment and hoped that the motion as proposed could be supported.

68.22 The Mayor noted that the amendment had not been accepted and put it to the vote which was lost by 19 votes to 27.

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

“This council resolves to:

1. Show its support to the VictimFocus Charter Pledge by signing up to it, and
2. Request officers to bring a report to the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities Committee to detail how that pledge can then be fulfilled to challenge and reduce victim blaming of people who have experienced trauma, abuse or crime in our organisation.”

68.24 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been agreed unanimously.

