

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

4.30PM - 7 DECEMBER 2006

HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Smith (Mayor); Councillors Allen, Barnett, Bennett, Bodfish, Mrs Brown, Burgess, Carden, Mrs Cobb, Davidson, Mrs Drake, Edmond-Smith, Elgood, Fitch, Forester, Framroze, Giebeler, Hamilton, Hawkes, Hyde, John, Kemble, Lepper, McCaffery, Meadows, Mears, Meegan, Mitchell, Morgan, Mrs A Norman, K Norman, Older, Oxley, Paskins, Peltzer Dunn, Pennington, Pidgeon, Randall, Mrs Simson, Taylor, Mrs C Theobald, G Theobald, Tonks, Turner, Turton, Watkins, Wells, Williams, Wrighton and Young.

Councillor Hazelgrove was absent on Council business.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

40.1 Councillor Kemble declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item No. 51 as he was a taxi driver.

41. MINUTES

41.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 October 2006 be approved and signed as a correct record of the proceedings, subject to the inclusion of a petition presented by Councillor Mears, signed by 1283 residents, concerning housing repairs contracts.

42. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

42.1 The Mayor stated that he wished to call on Councillor Hawkes to speak with respect to the recent loss of ex-councillor Jackie Harding and Councillor Kemble with respect to the loss of two fire-fighters at the Lewes fire. He also noted that the Chief Fire Officer was in attendance and therefore felt it would be appropriate for him to update Council on the events at Lewes.

42.2 Councillor Hawkes paid tribute to the late Jackie Harding, noting her role and time on the City Council and her work on early years education which was now coming to fruition.

42.3 Councillor Kemble paid tribute to the two fire-fighters who had given

their lives during the fire at Lewes and gave thanks to all the service personnel involved in the incident.

42.4 The Mayor then called for a minute's silence as a mark of respect for Jackie Harding and the two fire-fighters.

42.5 The Mayor then invited the Chief Fire Officer to address the council.

42.6 The Chief Fire Officer thanked the Mayor for enabling him to attend the meeting and to update the council on the situation at Lewes. He was grateful for the kind words received from the Chief Executive on behalf of the council and had passed these onto the two families who had lost their relatives. The fire had been a major incident with crews from Brighton & Hove in attendance, and as yet the cause of the explosion which had led to the loss of lives had not been determined. Work was now underway to find the cause of the fire and an investigation was being undertaken which involved a number of agencies and he hoped a full report would then be made available at the conclusion of the investigation.

The Mayor thanked the Chief Fire Officer for the information and his time.

42.7 The Mayor noted that the council had won a number of awards and invited the relevant Chairs to present them.

Councillor Mitchell presented the award for Transport Authority of the Year.

Councillor Mitchell presented the award for runner-up in the Alexander Dennis Award for Enterprise, which was for bus patronage and noted it was the first of its kind in England.

Councillor John presented the award for the 'site we wish we built' in the Brighton Web Awards for the Councillors' Web-Pages and paid particular note to Councillors Norman and Morgan who had become prolific bloggers.

Councillor Edmond-Smith presented the award for the 2006 Renewable Energy Award.

Councillor Forester presented a Green Apple Award for the Supplementary Planning Document and Waste which had been completed in conjunction with East Sussex County Council.

Councillor Hawkes presented a Green Apple Award Certificate given for the Young Environmentalist of the Year.

Councillor John presented a Green Apple Award for the Jubilee Library in respect of the Built Environment.

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Mrs Drake on the £10,000 Lottery Award for the Police Museum.

43. MAYOR ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT

43.1 The Chief Executive invited nominations for the Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2007/2008.

43.2 It was moved by Councillor Fitch and seconded by Councillor Watkins that Councillor Bodfish be Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2007/2008.

43.3 Councillor Oxley stated that the Conservative Group could not support Councillor Bodfish's nomination at this point in time. On a personal level he was pleased to see the support of the Labour Group for Councillor Bodfish, but in view of the forthcoming elections it was felt that consideration would need to be given to the nomination of Mayor once the results of the elections were known, and in this respect the Conservative Group wished to reserve its position.

43.4 The motion was carried.

43.5 It was moved by Councillor Oxley and seconded by Councillor Fitch that Councillor Smith be Deputy Mayor Elect for the municipal year 2007/2008.

43.6 The motion was carried.

44. PETITIONS

44.1 The Mayor invited the submission of petitions from Councillors. He reminded the Council that petitions would be referred to the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee without debate and the Councillor presenting the petition would be invited to attend the meeting to which the petition was referred.

44.2 Councillor Barnett presented a petition signed by 471 residents concerning traffic calming for Elm Drive, Rowan Avenue and Moyne Close area of Hove.

44.3 Councillor Fitch presented a petition signed by 207 residents concerning traffic calming for Holmes Avenue, Hove.

44.4 Councillor Fitch presented a petition signed by 61 residents

concerning the introduction of a rapid response force by the Police to deal with incidents of vandalism in the Hangleton area.

- 44.5 Councillor Fitch presented a petition signed by 39 residents concerning the introduction of a 30mph speed limit on the Old Shoreham Road, between Hove Cemetery and Boundary Road.
- 44.6 Councillor Fitch presented a petition signed by 33 residents concerning the provision of a new toddler's playground in Knoll Recreation Ground and the installation of park lighting from Stapley Road through to Hove Cemetery.
- 44.7 Councillor Fitch presented a petition signed by 18 residents concerning the request for a road safety audit on all the roads in Hangleton & Knoll ward, ensuring safe access measures to all schools and sheltered homes.
- 44.8 Councillor Tonks presented a petition signed by 223 residents requesting an increase in the number of books held in the city libraries.
- 44.9 Councillor Tonks presented a petition on behalf of Councillor Hazelgrove signed by 184 residents concerning the opening hours of the libraries in the city.
- 44.10 Councillor Mitchell presented a petition signed by 60 residents concerning the need for a bus service along Wilson Avenue.
- 44.11 Councillor Wrighton presented a petition signed by 251 residents concerning the danger of seeking access to Queens park via the junction at Egremont Place.
- 44.12 Councillor Burgess presented a petition signed by 800 residents concerning the Secondary Admissions Review.
- 44.13 Councillor Pennington presented a petition signed by 93 residents concerning the removal of A Boards.
- 44.14 Councillor Mears presented a petition signed by 1,100 residents concerning council housing repairs and maintenance contracts.
- 44.15 Councillor Oxley presented a petition signed by 135 residents concerning improvements to the Valley Parade Shops.
- 44.16 Councillor Watkins presented a petition signed by 11 residents concerning the imposition of a 20mph speed limit for the whole of Lansdowne Place.

- 44.17 Councillor Allen presented a petition signed by 300 residents concerning the Dyke Road Playground.
- 44.18 Councillor Allen presented a petition signed by 48 residents concerning the Medical Centre and staff at Preston Road.
- 44.19 Councillor Peltzer Dunn presented a petition signed by 400 residents concerning the opposition to the proposed skate park on Hove Lagoon.
- 44.20 Councillor Taylor presented a petition signed by 26 residents concerning the opposition to any renewal or replacement of Britain's nuclear weapons.

45. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 45.1 The Mayor reported that eight written questions had been received from members of the public.
- 45.2 Mr Mark Stack asked the following question:

“At a public meeting, if a Councillor repeatedly refuses to tell the residents of his/her ward how he/she voted in Council on their behalf, does their position of Councillor for that ward become morally untenable?”

Councillor Burgess replied.

- 45.3 Mr Christopher Hawtree asked the following question:

“Could Councillor Burgess please tell us what steps he has taken to ensure that the recent White Paper about arrangements for local government is amended in order to take account of the fact that, after a referendum, Brighton & Hove City Council operates a Committee system?”

Councillor Burgess replied. Mr Hawtree asked a supplementary question and received a further reply from Councillor Burgess.

- 45.4 Mr Nigel Furness submitted the following question:

“Could Councillor Burgess please tell us when the Council will catch up with other authorities and adopt the 21st-century custom of broadcasting proceedings such as this one on the Internet for those who are unable to be present?”

Councillor Burgess provided a written reply.

45.5 Mr Sean Humphries asked the following question:

“Having received the offer document to Council Tenants and Leaseholders, I want to know in advance the date of the ballot. Will Councillor Don Turner now at this Council meeting give a clear and unequivocal answer to the question – What is the date of the tenant ballot on transfer to a housing association?”

Councillor Turner replied. Mr Humphries asked a supplementary question and received a further reply from Councillor Turner.

45.6 Ms Lucy Grout asked the following question:

“Does the Council agree that the SAR Parent Stakeholder and Working Groups, under the guidance of the CFS, have done an excellent job in producing a blueprint for the future of comprehensive secondary education in this city? And do they not agree that it would be a betrayal of yet another year's intake if the current policy were to remain in place for a fourth disastrous year in 2008?”

Councillor Hawkes replied. Ms Grout asked a supplementary question and received a further reply from Councillor Hawkes.

45.7 Mr Philip Meldrum asked the following question:

“Almost the biggest challenge as part of the SAR activity has been to convey full understanding of the problem being addressed. However, the SAR and its Working Group have recognised that there is clear discrimination against large swathes of east Hove, central and east Brighton and against many socially deprived areas. Does the Council therefore agree that continued use of the distance only criteria is indefensible?”

Councillor Hawkes replied. Mr Meldrum asked a supplementary question and received a further reply from Councillor Hawkes.

45.8 Mr Chris Bourne asked the following question:

“Assurance was given at CFS on 23 January this year that: ‘The CFS Committee is charged with representing the city as a whole in their committee deliberations and can therefore categorically acknowledge that all decisions, including those related to the Director's Secondary Admissions Review, are made for the benefit of Brighton & Hove as a whole’.

What assurances can be provided that inner city families, who make up 20 percent of the city, will be heard when no-one on CFS directly represents them?"

Councillor Hawkes replied. Mr Bourne asked a supplementary question and received a further reply from Councillor Hawkes.

45.9 Ms Millie Ferguson asked the following question:

"Can Councillor Mitchell assure us that the Council will support residents in deferring the planned felling of trees by Network Rail on March 4th behind the houses on Addison and Highdown Roads, a marvellous array of trees which are visible from the railway bridge in Montefiore Road by everybody?"

Councillor Mitchell replied. Ms Ferguson asked a supplementary question and received a further reply from Councillor Mitchell.

46. DEPUTATIONS

46.1 The Council heard a Deputation requesting that Councillors start representing their respective ward's residents more. Mr Mark Stack was the spokesperson on behalf of residents. Councillor Burgess replied.

46.2 The Mayor thanked Mr Stack for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the Deputation. He explained that the points made had been duly noted by Councillors.

46.3 The Council heard a Deputation concerning a request to carry out basic enhancement works to the parade of shops in Valley Road, Portslade. Mr Anthony Janio was the spokesperson on behalf of residents. Councillor Mitchell replied.

46.4 The Mayor thanked Mr Janio for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the Deputation. He explained that the points made had been noted and would now be referred to the appropriate Committee. The persons forming the Deputation would be invited to attend the Committee meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action taken or proposed in relation to the matters set out by the Deputation.

46.5 The Council heard a Deputation concerning the Secondary Admissions Review. Miss Matilda Strachan was the spokesperson on behalf of residents. Councillor Hawkes replied.

46.6 The Mayor thanked Miss Strachan for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the Deputation. He explained that the points

made had been noted and would now be referred to the appropriate Committee. The persons forming the Deputation would be invited to attend the Committee meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action taken or proposed in relation to the matters set out by the Deputation.

47. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

47.1 The Mayor reminded the Council that Councillors' questions were now taken as read by reference to the list, which had been circulated.

47.2 Questions on the following subjects were replied to by the appropriate Councillor as follows:-

| Questioner | Subject | Reply by |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Councillor Elgood | Proposals to introduce a 20mph speed limit in Lansdowne Place | Councillor Mitchell |
| Councillor Taylor and supplementary question | A controlled parking zone for the London Road station area | Councillor Mitchell |
| Councillor Morgan and supplementary question | Madeira Shelter Hall | Councillor Mitchell |
| Councillor Oxley and supplementary questions from Councillors Oxley and Simson | Street lighting contract with EDF | Councillor Mitchell |
| Councillor Oxley and supplementary questions from Councillors Oxley and Peltzer Dunn | King Alfred site and the proposed housing off-site | Councillor Burgess |
| Councillor Cobb and supplementary question | Hove No 1 lawn and the proposed redevelopment of the King Alfred site | Councillor Mitchell |
| Councillor Older and supplementary question | A-boards on pavements | Councillor Mitchell |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Councillor Randall and supplementary question | Patcham Court Farm | Councillor Burgess |
| Councillor Williams and supplementary questions from Councillors Williams and Taylor | Housing stock transfer ballot | Councillor Burgess |

48. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: CALLOVER

48.1 The following items were reserved for discussion:

| Committee | Item |
|---|--|
| Children & Young People's Trust Board: 20 November 2006 | 9.1(a) Youth Homelessness strategy |
| Licensing Committee (Non-Licensing Act 2003 Functions): 23 November 2006 | 9.2(a) Availability of wheelchair accessible taxis |
| Policy & Resources Committee: 30 November 2006 | 9.3(a) Amendments to the Constitution |

48.2 The Chief Executive confirmed that with the exception of the items reserved for discussion in 48.1 above the reports of the Committees appearing under item 9 on the agenda with the recommendations or resolutions contained therein be approved and adopted. The Council agreed.

49. ORAL QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

49.1 There were no oral questions from Councillors on the items, which had not been reserved for discussion.

50. YOUTH HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

50.1 It was moved by Councillor Hawkes that the report of the Children & Young People's Trust Board in relation to the Youth Homelessness Strategy be approved.

50.2 The motion was carried.

51. AVAILABILITY OF WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXIS

51.1 It was moved by Councillor Lepper that the report of the Licensing Committee (Non-Licensing Act 2003 Functions) in relation to the availability of wheelchair accessible taxis be approved.

51.2 The motion was carried.

52. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

52.1 It was moved by Councillor Burgess that the report of the Policy and Resources Committee in relation to the amendments to the Constitution be approved.

52.2 The motion was carried.

53. REPORT OF ACCESS SCRUTINY PANEL

53.1 It was moved by Councillor Paskins that the report of the Access Scrutiny Panel be approved.

53.2 The motion was carried.

54. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Trident Nuclear Weapons Replacement

54.1 The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Randall:

"This Council recognises that:

- Explicit as part of its membership of the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities is an endorsement of that association's core values, including an obligation to "make our governments understand that nuclear disarmament is of primary necessity".
- That as part of our obligations under the Local Government Act 2003, we have a duty to care for the economic, social and environmental well-being of the city.

Further this Council notes that:

- Trident, Britain's nuclear weapons system is due to reach the end of its service life in the 2020s. The government has said that it will take a decision on replacing Trident before the end of this year.
- The estimated cost of a Trident replacement programme is £25bn.
- Britain is a signatory of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty which,

under Article VI provides for nuclear disarmament:

- “Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control”.
- Early Day Motions 2575, 1197 have been introduced into Parliament, calling for adherence to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty in abandoning any Trident replacement, and that a full parliamentary vote and debate is facilitated.

This Council believes:

- There should be a full parliamentary debate and vote on whether to proceed with replacement.
- That the £25bn would be better spent on delivery of welfare services, a proportion of which could be used to offset the severest social problems of Brighton & Hove.

And accordingly resolves to:

- Request our city MPs to support any anti-Trident replacement EDMs and in the event of a parliamentary vote support this resolution.
- Instruct our Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister advising him of this city's opposition to Trident replacement.”

54.2 The Motion was lost.

(b) Aids Support Grant (ASG) Cuts

54.3 The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Randall and seconded by Councillor Williams:

“This council notes Government spending cuts of more than 30 per cent that have seen the Aids Support Grant (ASG) in the city slashed from £437,000 in 2002/03 to £307,380 in 2006/07 following a change in government policy to reflect a national increase in HIV/Aids among women and children and a greater concentration of resources to meet their needs.

It acknowledges that, while the needs of women and children with HIV/Aids must not be overlooked, the cuts do not reflect the epidemiology of infection in Brighton and Hove, which has a very high level of infection among gay men in a city which is home to a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community of about 35,000 people.

It further notes that the annual increase in HIV/Aids among gay men in the city is 12 per cent and that 920 clients used the services of groups supported by the programme in 2004/2005.

This council, therefore:

- Condemns the inflexibility of the national HIV/AIDS funding formula and its consequent cuts, which pose a serious threat to the welfare of those with HIV/Aids and the future of organisations working with them.
- Pledges to campaign for the restoration of these cuts and to seek the support of the city's three MPs in doing so.
- Will seek a commitment from the Government that the funding will not be scrapped altogether in two years time – a prospect that is a cause of deep concern to the Terrence Higgins Trust, Brighton Body Positive, Open Door and other LGBT and health groups working in the city."

54.4 The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Mrs Norman and seconded by Councillor Oxley:

"This council notes Government spending cuts of more than 30 per cent that have seen the Aids Support Grant (ASG) in the city slashed from £437,000 in 2002/03 to £307,380 in 2006/07 following a change in government policy to reflect a national increase in HIV/Aids among women and children and a greater concentration of resources to meet their needs.

It acknowledges that, while the needs of women and children with HIV/Aids must not be overlooked, the cuts do not reflect the epidemiology of infection in Brighton and Hove, which has a very high level of infection among gay men in a city which is home to a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community of about 35,000 people.

It further notes that the annual increase in HIV/Aids among gay men in the city is 12 per cent and that 920 clients used the services of groups supported by the programme in 2004/2005.

This council, therefore:

- Condemns the inflexibility of the national HIV/AIDS funding formula and its consequent cuts, which pose a serious threat to the welfare of those with HIV/Aids and the future of organisations working with them.

- Pledges to campaign for the ~~restoration of these cuts~~ **reinstatement of the funds that have been cut** and to seek the support of the city's three MPs in doing so.
- **Instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Department of Health, calling for Government to cut back on prescribing how money should be spent locally, and instead to allow local health providers the freedom to gear their spending to local needs.**
- Will seek a commitment from the Government that the funding will not be scrapped altogether in two years time – a prospect that is a cause of deep concern to the Terrence Higgins Trust, Brighton Body Positive, Open Door and other LGBT and health groups working in the city.”

54.5 The Motion was carried.

(c) Travellers

54.6 Prior to consideration of the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Randall and seconded by Councillor Wrighton, in view of the lateness of the day and to enable a full debate of the issue, Councillor Randall asked that it be deferred for consideration at the next ordinary Council meeting:

“This Council notes the problems caused in many areas of Brighton and Hove by gypsies and travellers setting up unofficial campsites. It further notes the cost to the city's council taxpayers of clearing up the sites and making good the environmental damage caused.

At the same time it acknowledges the harm caused to the health, wellbeing and education of gypsies and travellers and their families who are constantly on the move because of an acute shortage of permanent sites.

It also recognises that successive national governments have contributed to this situation by failing to create a national framework and funding for the provision of sites for travellers and gypsies.

It therefore calls on the Government to:

- Place a legal duty on local authorities to provide permanent sites for gypsies and travellers within a national and regional framework and within an agreed timescale.
- Make adequate funding available to provide the sites.
- Ensure gypsies and travellers and the organisations that represent them are involved in drawing up the plans for a national network of sites.
- Maintain funding to upgrade and improve existing sites.
- Involve the gypsy and traveller community in the management of new and existing sites.
- As an interim measure, pay for the clean-up operations following illegal encampments.

In campaigning for these measures it will seek the support of the Local Government Association and the city's three MPs."

54.7 The Motion was deferred for consideration at the next ordinary council meeting on 8 March 2007.

(d) Victoria Gardens and Old Steine

54.8 The following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Barnett and seconded by Councillor Mears was withdrawn by Councillor Barnett prior to consideration:

"This Council is concerned about the impression that visitors entering the city may receive from the Victoria Gardens and the Old Steine.

This Council recalls that, in the not-too-distant past, these gardens were replete with colourful plant-life and delightful upon the eye.

This Council believes that through years of neglect, these gardens are no longer a credit to the city.

This Council regrets the fact that these gardens could have been properly maintained for a little extra money.

This Council imagines how much better these gardens would appear had, for example, an extra £264,367 been spent on them – the amount of grant money which was spent on Circuit Touristique, which remains a mystery to virtually every resident and visitor, and is not even advertised on the council's website.

This Council believes that the city's image can be enhanced by the re-beautification of the Victoria Gardens and the Old Steine."

(e) Decision-Making Structure of the Council

54.9 The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Oxley and seconded by Councillor Peltzer Dunn:

"This Council notes the emphasis placed by the recent Local Government White Paper on council decision-making structures.

This Council notes that the White Paper stated that the Government's preferred choices of local decision-making structure were the elected mayor and cabinet system, and the Leader and Cabinet system.

This Council views such recommendations with concern in the light of a recent report published by local government expert Steve Leach.

This Council notes, in particular, the following conclusions of the Leach Report:

- (i) 'There is no real evidence linking leadership type with results.'
- (ii) 'The NLGN survey found no statistically significant difference between the public satisfaction ratings of mayoral and non-mayoral leaders.'
- (iii) 'It is not possible to argue that elected mayors have caught the imagination of the public and led (in this sense) to democratic gains.'
- (iv) 'The reality is that [effective] outcomes can be and are achieved by leadership styles which are not congruent with government's ideal type.'
- (v) 'The decision to withdraw the requirement for the referendum before an elected mayor model can be adopted is a retrograde step.'
- (vi) 'The decision to introduce legislation to prescribe the form and tenure of political executives... is not justified by the evidence, is based on a confusion between "strong" and "effective" leadership, shows little understanding of the way in which politics actually works on local councils, and constitutes an unnecessary intervention in the political management arrangements of local authorities.'
- (vii) 'Local authorities should be judged on their results (performance, democratic qualities) not on the means they use to achieve them unless a clear means-end relationship can be established. In this case, it can't!'

This Council recalls the motion on Mayors that it passed on March

16th, 2006, and recalls the words of the Council Leader at that same meeting:

'I can confirm that neither myself nor the Labour Group have any plans to change existing constitutional arrangements. I think it is right that there is a choice, as I have already said, for local people to make that decision and I believe they have already made that decision in relation to a Mayoral Referendum.'

With the comments of Leach and the Council Leader in mind, this Council:

- asks the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pointing out the proven merits of Brighton and Hove's committee system and stating this Council's commitment to strengthening it;
- invites the city's three MPs to co-sign this letter;
- sends a copy of this letter to the Argus and other interested local media;
- makes sure to stress the benefits of the existing committee system during the 'special discussions' that Ruth Kelly MP is allegedly seeking to hold."

54.10 The motion was carried.

(f) Getting the City Moving

54.11 The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Kemble and seconded by Councillor Oxley:

"This Council recognises the integral role played by the rail and bus companies in moving visitors and residents around a crowded city.

This Council also notes that it is ideally placed to help co-ordinate the thinking of bus and rail companies, and the people who use their services, for the maximum benefit of the city.

This Council is concerned that, despite existing marketing efforts, not all residents and visitors are aware of the cheaper travel opportunities offered by schemes such as Plus Bus and Saver initiatives.

This Council notes that Plus Bus operates in over 100 UK cities, and allows residents and visitors to combine all-day bus travel with return train tickets by adding just £2 to their fare. Plus Bus can also be added to rail season tickets for the benefit of the city's 30,000 commuters.

This Council also notes that First Capital Connect and Southern Savers allow visitors and residents to travel to London and back, and use buses in the City Saver Area, for just £12.50, provided they buy the ticket on a Brighton and Hove bus and do not travel at peak times.

This Council is aware that the success of the above initiatives depends on sound bus-train integration in the city, and welcomes the new wave of constructive dialogue between the bus company, passenger organisations and councillors.

Furthermore, this Council is also aware that the attractiveness of the initiative depends on buses being able to move around the city as quickly and easily as possible.

This Council:

- (a) recognises the potential of cheaper, environmentally-friendly travel initiatives to boost the local economy, especially the tourism sector;
- (b) welcomes the attempts of VisitBrighton to advertise train company Saver initiatives and Plus Bus on its website;
- (c) believes that Plus Bus and train company Saver initiatives should be more visibly advertised on its own website;
- (d) recognises the need to take full advantage of its ability to co-ordinate the aspirations of rail companies, bus companies and passenger groups to enable a faster-moving, free-flowing Brighton and Hove."

54.12 The motion was carried.

(g) Ryan Moore's Success

54.13 The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Wells and seconded by Councillor Simson:

"This Council sends the warmest congratulations to Ryan Moore, born and bred in Woodingdean, and winner of the 2006 British Jockey Championship.

As a flat racing jockey champion, Ryan can now justifiably be compared with the likes of Frankie Dettori, Lester Piggott and even Sir Gordon Richards.

This Council resolves to send a letter to Ryan, congratulating him on his achievements and wishing him every success for his future horse racing career."

54.14 The Motion was carried.

(h) Local Government White Paper

54.15 The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Watkins and seconded by Councillor Elgood:

"This Council notes the publication of the 'Local Government White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities'.

This Council notes with concern that the White Paper states that councils, other than "*those who, by reason of their small size*", who operate the modernised committee system, will be required to change to one of the following three models:

- Directly elected mayors;
- Directly elected executives; and
- Leaders elected for four year terms by councillors.

In noting the importance of open and effective local governance to the residents of Brighton & Hove, this Council reaffirms its position following the public referendum against the imposition of a directly elected mayor.

This Council welcomes the overall success of the committee system, as providing a relatively open and inclusive process of decision-making, and favours this model to the other proposed structures, namely directly elected executives or leaders elected for four year terms.

Furthermore, it requests the Chief Executive to make urgent representations to the Secretary of State, the city's three MPs and to the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Local Government Spokespeople in the House of Commons to urge for the retention of the committee system and to request that the Secretary of State allows the modernised committee system to remain in place for the City Council."

54.16 The motion was carried.

(i) Licensing Act 2003 – One Year On

54.17 The following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Oxley and seconded by Councillor Mrs Norman was withdrawn by Councillor Oxley prior to consideration:

"*This Council is deeply concerned by the findings of the recent Argus report into binge-drinking, conducted one year after the recent*

Licensing Act came into effect.

This Council acknowledges that while the Licensing Act has successfully allowed police to close down problem premises, the first year of relaxed opening hours has provided many causes for concern.

This Council notes in particular the comments of Chief Superintendent Jeremy Paine, which appeared in the Argus report: 'In this country, we have a big cultural problem with the amount of alcohol some people drink. It's not just crime, it affects health and society. This is the clarion call from ground workers who pick up the pieces... There is next to no funding for dealing with alcohol.'

In view of the fact that Government suggested that the Act would 'improve quality of life', this Council also notes the comments of Martin Shalley, president of the British Association of Emergency Medicine: 'Bars are still geared towards alcoholic drinks culture rather than a café culture. Since last year, the number of people being brought into A&E departments with drink-related problems has not gone up or down.'

This Council further notes the comments of Geoff Webber, Regional Manager for Walkabout in West Street: 'We are finding people are coming to town later and we have to refuse many of them entry [because they are drunk].'

While this Council acknowledges that police are more confident about issuing on-the-spot fines for drink-related anti-social behaviour, it is still concerned that so many fines have to be issued (1370 in Brighton and Hove alone since November 2005).

The fact that so many fines have to be issued suggests that, one year on, the relaxation of licensing hours has not produced the desired changes to the behaviour of binge-drinkers, and has not resulted in a decrease in alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour.

This Council:

- Expresses its unflinching support for the police in the fight against alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour;*
- Resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for the Home Office, outlining the concerns expressed in this Notice of Motion."*

(j) Nursery Vouchers

54.18 The following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Young and

seconded by Councillor Oxley was withdrawn by Councillor Young prior to consideration:

"This Council is concerned that the Government's nursery voucher scheme is falling woefully short of its desired objectives.

This Council regrets the fact that the Government's attempts to widen access to childcare through nursery vouchers are having the opposite effects to those intended.

This Council understands that in the past, parents and guardians in search of more comprehensive nursery services were allowed to pay extra to acquire such services. However, the Government chose to deprive parents and guardians of this choice by forbidding nurseries from charging fees in addition to nursery vouchers.

As a result of the Government's decision, nurseries providing a more comprehensive range of services are losing up to £50,000 a year, and will simply have to cut back on services in order to break even.

This Council cannot support the equalisation of nursery standards by effectively encouraging the best nurseries to provide less, instead of by encouraging the most basic nurseries to provide more.

This Council therefore:

- Expresses concern at the Government attempts to restrict choice by making it difficult for nurseries to fund more comprehensive service provision;*
- Instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education, outlining the concerns expressed in this Notice of Motion, and asking the Government to reinstate parental choice over nursery education."*

The meeting concluded at 9.02pm.

Signed

Mayor

Dated this

day of

2007

