

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

30 September 2004

NOTICE OF MOTION

eb4U

This Council notes the Government's £47 million commitment to tackling multiple deprivation in East Brighton through its New Deal for Communities (NDC) scheme – eb4U. Furthermore, this Council applauds the hard work and commitment of all those involved in eb4u, which has led to some significant quality of life improvements as the scheme approaches its halfway point.

However, this Council holds concerns about how effectively parts of this money are being spent and how this could impact on the ability of eb4U to meet the challenging targets for community improvement which have been set. In particular:

- The recent Employment Tribunal relating to an alleged case of unfair dismissal brought by a 'whistleblower' from a project funded by eb4u. Whilst the Tribunal did not uphold the claim, it did endorse the employee's allegations that there were defective financial and management controls operating within eb4U. The report of the Employment Tribunal bears this out stating that: "there is a great deal of evidence which justifies a lack of confidence in the way this project (ICT Co-ordinator Project) was administered."
- An independent evaluation of the national NDC scheme in October 2003, by Professor Paul Lawless of Sheffield Hallam University, highlighted 'teething problems' experienced by many of the 39 schemes. These included: concerns over project management; high staff turnover; tensions between different localities in the NDC areas; a failure to engage black and minority ethnic groups; reductions in mainstream funding as a result of NDC activity.

Policy and Resources Committee therefore respectfully requests the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Organisation Committee, at its meeting, to establish a Scrutiny Panel to:-

- i) consider the approaches that eb4U have taken to project and financial management and what success they have had to date in achievement against their targets and
- ii) draw out useful lessons that can be learnt from a range of recent national NDC evaluation work and
- iii) consider how the Council has discharged its responsibilities as 'accountable body' for the NDC scheme and
- iv) consider the relationship between eb4U and the City Council to date at both a strategic and project level from a member and officer perspective and

to make recommendations to the City Council (and where relevant to eb4U) to maximise the opportunities that exist for the regeneration of East Brighton via New Deal for Communities over the remaining 5 years of the scheme to ensure full public confidence in the on going eb4u programme.'