

Council	Agenda Item 51(e)
15 December 2011	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

GREEN GROUP

THE DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT CUTS ON WOMEN

“This council notes the Government has embarked on an unprecedented cull of public services. Budgets have been slashed in all areas, from health and education to the legal aid service and benefits for the neediest in our society.

Women are the main victims of these cuts, according to the Brighton Women’s Centre. More women than men work in the public sector, many of them part-time, and face unemployment as a result of the Coalition’s attack on public services. Indeed, according to research released in the Autumn by the GMB, 66.4 per cent of the jobs lost by councils this year were held by women, and female unemployment is rising across the board.

Other Government cuts, like those to tax credits for example, further penalise women. Researchers from the House of Commons Library calculate that 73 per cent of the £2.37 billion the Chancellor plans to raise from changes to tax credits and a cap on public sector pay will come from women who will lose £1.73 billion. Deep cuts in social housing budgets are condemning a rising number of local women to homelessness and poor housing.

In its continuing work to end discrimination against women and others, the council recently adopted a new Equality Impact Assessment policy requiring the impact of all budget proposals to be analysed to make sure equalities implications are considered as part of any proposal. The council also supports organisations such as The Fawcett Society and the TUC who have been campaigning hard to ensure gender equality issues are factored in to the way cuts are made to ensure women don’t bear the brunt.

Specifically, we note and support the Fawcett Society’s ‘Life Raft for Women’s Equality’ campaign [1], which calls on the Government and councils to do four things:

1. Help support families
2. Help support women and girls who are the victims of violence
3. Help make work pay for low-income mothers
4. Help protect women from poverty in retirement

This council therefore resolves to:

(a) Support cabinet in its work to make Brighton & Hove City Council a 'best practice' authority in equality terms;

(b) Ask the Chief Executive to write to the city's three MPs, expressing this council's concerns and asking them to support the Fawcett Society campaign and other campaigns aimed at achieving greater equality for women;

(c) Endorse its support for the 'Life Raft for Women's Equality' campaign and work more closely with the Fawcett Society.”

Proposed by: Cllr Stephanie Powell

Seconded by: Cllr Alex Phillips

Supported by: Cllrs Geoffrey Bowden, Ruth Buckley, Ian Davey, Lizzie Deane, Ben Duncan, Matt Follett, Christopher Hawtree, Rob Jarrett, Mike Jones, Amy Kennedy, Ania Kitcat, Jason Kitcat, Leo Littman, Phelim Mac Cafferty, Bill Randall, Sven Rufus, Sue Shanks, Christina Summers, Ollie Sykes, Liz Wakefield and Pete West.

[1]

[http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/documents/A%20Life%20Raft%20for%20Women's%20Equality%20FINAL\(1\).pdf](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/documents/A%20Life%20Raft%20for%20Women's%20Equality%20FINAL(1).pdf)