

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE	Agenda Item 40 (a) ii
10 October 2019	Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Stop the Theft of Brighton General Hospital Site: Keep it Public!		
Date of Meeting:	10 October 2019		
Report of:	Executive Director Economy Environment & Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name: Lisa Johnson	Tel: 01273 291228	
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

<i>Action Required of the Policy & Resources Committee</i>	
To receive the petition referred from the Council for consideration.	
2.1	Recommendation: That the petition is noted and referred to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee for consideration at its meeting on the 10 th October 2019.
2.2	That Policy & Resources Committee be requested to commission a report to explore the options to buy the general hospital site, including obtaining preferred buyer status, subject to OJEU regulations;
2.3	That this report seek to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to embed the acquisition of the site under the departmental Plans detailed in the forthcoming corporate strategy; and - how to maximise the amount of council housing at the site, available at the lowest possible rents, once health provision needs have been fully addressed.

Petition:

Stop the Theft of Brighton General Hospital Site: Keep it Public!

1. Conduct a more meaningful and extensive public consultation on the potential uses for this site - NHS, housing and community.
2. Explore further NHS uses for this site - such as community beds.
3. Brighton and Hove city to purchase the site.
4. Ensure any housing built on this site includes housing for social rent, keyworker housing and addresses the needs of homeless people in the city.

Lead Petitioner – Diane Montgomery

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 25 July 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER - HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Phillips (Chair), Robins (Deputy Chair), Simson, Allcock, Appich, Atkinson, Bagaeen, Barnett, Bell, Brennan, Brown, Childs, Clare, Davis, Deane, Druitt, Ebel, Evans, Fishleigh, Fowler, Gibson, Grimshaw, Hamilton, Heley, Henry, Hill, Hills, Hugh-Jones, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Lloyd, Mac Cafferty, Mears, McNair, Miller, Moonan, Nemeth, Nield, O'Quinn, Osborne, Peltzer Dunn, Pissaridou, Platts, Powell, Rainey, Shanks, C Theobald, Wares, West, Wilkinson, Williams and Yates

PART ONE

18 PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE

(1) Stop the Theft of Brighton General Hospital Site: Keep it Public!

- 18.11 The Mayor invited Mr T Galvin to come forward to present the petition which related to the development of the Brighton General Hospital site and noted that there was an amendment from the Green Group to the recommendations.

- 18.12 Mr Galvin said that the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust planned to sell the Brighton General Hospital and develop a new Community Health Hub. Brighton General Hospital Action Group believe that this public land must remain a public asset for the people of Brighton and Hove. The Action Group believed that this site redevelopment offered the opportunity to address some of the much needed and urgent health, social care and housing needs in the City and were concerned that the current proposals were inadequate. Mr Galvin said that there were 1800 signatures to the petition.
- 18.13 Councillor Platts, Leader of the Council, said that as the Chair of the Policy Resources & Growth Committee she welcomed the interest in how local land should be used and agreed that the land should remain a public asset for the City. She noted that the NHS Community Foundation Trust had undertaken public consultation in 2018 on the site, and suggested that Mr Galvin write to her setting out how the consultation on the future of the site could be more meaningful and she would then write to Trust to support his campaign. Such a letter could also be an opportunity to request a meeting to discuss the purpose of the proposals as that was more of an issue for the Trust rather than the Council. The Trust and the Council were working together to find practical ways to address local housing needs. The Health Hub would need to be self-funding due to there being no NHS capital funding. My intention was to stay in touch with both yourself and the NHS Trust to ensure the voice of the community was heard.
- 18.14 Councillor Gibson proposed an amendment to add two further recommendations which would speed up and reinforce the action which had already been taken. The Council had discussed the housing crisis in the City, the affordability of housing and the number of those in temporary and emergency housing. The additional recommendations included a request that the Policy & Resources Committee commission a report to explore options to buy the General Hospital site including obtaining a preferred buyer status. That report would consider how to embed the acquisition of the site under the departmental plans detailed in the forthcoming corporate strategy and how to maximise the amount of council housing at the lowest possible rents once health provision needs had been addressed.
- 18.15 Councillor Platts formally seconded the amendment.
- 18.16 Councillor Mears said that she understood the sentiment behind the petition. This was a large site and the NHS needed the site to improve medical facilities but there was also a demand for housing. Officers had been in discussions with the NHS on the future of the site for some time. The amendment asked for the Council to explore the possibility of purchasing the site, but Councillors needed to be conscious of the cost of doing that and said that the pot of available money was getting smaller and it was important to ensure that the right things were being delivered for the City. The Conservative Group would be supporting the amendment as there did need to be a fuller discussion around the possibilities for the site.
- 18.17 Councillor Platts the Council did want to purchase the site if it were available and to keep it as a public asset.
- 18.18 Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked for clarification on the number of signatures to the petition. Mr Galvin confirmed it was 1800. Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked that that be noted as the agenda stated it was 2,475. The Mayor agreed.

- 18.19 The Mayor asked if Council agreed the amendment and it was confirmed it was agreed.
- 18.20 The Mayor thanked the petitioner and confirmed that the petition (as amended) would be referred to the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.