



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

**NEIGHBOURHOODS, COMMUNITIES
AND EQUALITIES COMMITTEE
ADDENDUM**

4.00PM, MONDAY, 20 JULY 2015

**BRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTRE, LUCRAFT ROAD,
MOULSECOOMB, BRIGHTON, BN2 4PN**

ADDENDUM

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4	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT Public Question – Lynne Shields: Working with partners, providers and residents (copy attached).	1 - 2
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WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed for questions submitted by a member of the public who either lives or works in the area of the authority at each ordinary meeting of the Committee.

Every question shall be put and answered without discussion, but the person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer. The person who asked the question may ask one relevant supplementary question, which shall be put and answered without discussion.

The following written question has been received from a member of the public.

(a) Lynne Shields

The Policy and Resources Committee report July 9th stated that due to reduced funding it is likely the Council will "shrink".

The report suggested that as a result the relationship between the council, partners, providers and citizens will need to adapt.

Question

"How will we inform our neighbourhoods and communities about this "need to adapt" and how will these various groups be supported to work together in a positive and effective way?"

I will be joining The Older Peoples Council later in the month and will be representing East Brighton and Queens Park. I would like to know how I can support the Council in its aims to inform and adapt?"

**Reply from Councillor Daniel, Chair of the Neighbourhoods,
Communities & Equalities Committee**

Subject: Corporate Plan & Medium Term Financial Strategy
2015 – 2019: Budget Planning and Resource Update
2016/17 – Extract from the proceedings of the Policy
& Resources Committee meeting held on the 9th July
2015

Date of Meeting: 20 July 2015

Report of: Head of Legal & Democratic Services

Contact Officer: Name: **Ross Keatley** Tel: **29-1064**

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Council:

To receive the item referred from the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration.

Recommendation:

That the Committee consider the approach to Community Engagement & Consultation as set out in section 5 of the report.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

4.00pm 9 JULY 2015

AUDITORIUM - THE BRIGHTELM CENTRE

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Morgan (Chair), Hamilton (Deputy Chair), G Theobald (Opposition Spokesperson), Mac Cafferty (Group Spokesperson), Janio, Meadows, Mitchell, A Norman, Sykes and Wealls

PART ONE

24 CORPORATE PLAN & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2015 – 2019: BUDGET PLANNING AND RESOURCE UPDATE 2016/17

- 24.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive for Finance & Resources in relation to Corporate Plan & Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015- 2019: Budget Planning and Resource Update 2016/17. The report provided a budget planning and resource update for the 2016/17 budget process in the context of the Council's agreed Corporate Plan and Medium Financial Strategy 2015 – 2019. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was developed directly alongside the Corporate Plan, identifying common areas for investment to support priorities and principles that were shared with city partnerships.
- 24.2 Councillor G. Theobald welcomed the report and noted that the Conservative Group had been asking for a fundamental review of all Council services for some years – he also highlighted the decision of the previous administration to move away from the intelligent commissioning model. The surplus in the budget from 2014/15 was evidence that the authority could have frozen Council Tax in the budget, and the reduction in the number of Council Tax claimants was evidence that the reforms from Central Government were having an impact in the city. He expressed concern in relation to the spend on ICT and asked for greater assurance that this would create more stability in the ICT infrastructure.
- 24.3 Councillor Hamilton noted that the Council Tax reduction rates would have to be set by the end of the year; he added that whilst the scheme was advertised there would still be difficulties as the impact of benefits changes from Central Government would not be known yet.
- 24.4 Councillor Wealls added that the Conservative Group would work constructively to help deliver budget savings and he was in support of the four year planning. In response to a query the Chair confirmed that the review would look at how all services were delivered.

- 24.5 Councillor Janio referenced comments he had made at the previous meeting and stated that he welcomed the report and approach of the administration.
- 24.6 The Chair noted there was an amendment from the Green Group detailed in Addendum Two and invited Councillor Sykes to speak to his amendment.
- 24.7 Councillor Sykes highlighted that whilst he agreed with aspects of the papers in had concerns in a number of areas. It was his view that this approach would allow for privatisation of services in the organisation. He went on to add that there was little difference in the approach between the administration and the Conservative Group and stated his view that this would likely lead to a Council Tax freeze for the next financial year. He stated that the approach of his group would be bolder in terms of discussing the context of delivering cuts with the public. In relation to the amendment specifically he asked that as much information be available as possible to opposition groups in early December to allow early consultation to take place, and allow for discussions around other Council Tax options.
- 24.8 Councillor Mac Cafferty seconded the amendment and stated that the Green Group would prefer to go out to consultation with as much information as possible.
- 27.9 The Chair invited advice from the Monitoring Officer who explained that were the amendment carried then the £50K proposed for consultation would need to be identified from a specific budget. Councillor Sykes explained that this had not been identified, but would have to be considered further if the amendment was carried.
- 27.10 Councillors Meadows referenced the discussion earlier in the meeting in relation to bus services in her Ward and felt the proposed funding in the amendment could be better used to protect such services.
- 27.11 Councillor Hamilton noted his disappointment with the Green Group for bring forward the amendment without discussing it with other groups at the Budget Review Group. He noted that whilst the amendment asked for details to be forthcoming in December this would be before the Central Government Statement which was expected in January. He felt the amendment was a means to achieve a Council Tax referendum by another route, and stated that it was very unlikely the administration would pursue this option. It was also noted that the report would be referred to the Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee to allow further consideration of the consultation process.
- 27.12 Councillor A. Norman noted there was always annual budget consultation and she felt that this would cover the proposals in the amendment.
- 27.13 Councillor Sykes noted that when in administration the Green Group had provided as much information as possible to the December meeting of the Committee to give a good picture of the initial proposals for the next financial year. The amendment would allow enough information to be gathered to see if it was appropriate to propose a Council Tax increase that would trigger a referendum.
- 27.14 The Chair put the amendment from the Green Group to the vote. This was **lost**.

27.15 The Chair then put the recommendation as listed in the report to the vote. Councillors Mac Cafferty and Sykes asked that their abstentions be recorded.

27.16 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee

- 1) Note the resource and expenditure projections for 2016/17 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) projections set out in the body of the report and appendices 1 to 3.
- 2) Note the revised budget gap of £25M to be used for 2016/17 budget setting purposes as detailed at paragraph 3.45.
- 3) Instruct the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to develop 4-year service & Financial Plans for 2016/17 to 2019/20 in the context of Corporate Plan principles and priorities, for consideration by Policy & Resources Committee, comprising:
 - Detailed budget proposals for 2016/17;
 - Projected medium term proposals for 2017/18 to 2019/20;
 - Proposals to be based on two Council Tax options as follows:
 - i) A 1.99% increase in the Brighton & Hove element of the Council Tax, and
 - ii) No increase in the Brighton & Hove element of the Council Tax.
- 4) Refer the approach to Community Engagement & Consultation as set out in the section 5 of this report to the Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee for further consideration.
- 5) Agree the proposed approach to reviewing the Council Tax Reduction Scheme as set out in paragraphs 3.28 and 3.29
- 6) Note the resource projections for the Capital Investment Programme as shown in appendix 3.