



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

**NEIGHBOURHOODS, INCLUSION,
COMMUNITIES & EQUALITIES
COMMITTEE
ADDENDUM**

4.00PM, MONDAY, 11 MARCH 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

ADDENDUM

| ITEM | | Page |
|------|---|--------|
| 60 | MEMBER INVOLVEMENT Notice of Motion – Ending Victim Blaming | 5 - 12 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| Subject: | Ending Victim Blaming Together: Extract from the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on the 31 January 2019 | | |
| Date of Meeting: | 11 March 2019 | | |
| Report of: | Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law | | |
| Contact Officer: | Name: | Mark Wall | Tel: 01273 291006 |
| | E-mail: | mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

***Action Required of the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities
Committee***

To receive the notice of motion referred from the Council for consideration.

Recommendations: That the committee receive a report detailing how the VictimFocus pledge can be fulfilled to challenge and reduce victim blaming of people who have experienced trauma, abuse or crime in our organisation.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 31 JANUARY 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER - HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Simson (Chair), Phillips (Deputy Chair), Allen, Atkinson, Barford, Bell, Bennett, Bewick, Brown, Cattell, Chapman, Cobb, Daniel, Deane, Druitt, Gibson, Greenbaum, Hamilton, Hill, Horan, Hyde, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Marsh, Meadows, Mears, Miller, Mitchell, Moonan, Morris, Nemeth, A Norman, K Norman, O'Quinn, Page, Peltzer Dunn, Platts, Robins, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wares, Wealls, West and Yates.

PART ONE

68 THE FOLLOWING NOTICES OF MOTION HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS FOR CONSIDERATION:

(2) Ending Victim Blaming Together

- 68.15 The Notice of Motion as listed on the agenda was proposed by Councillor Daniel on behalf of the Labour & Co-operative Group. She stated that she had become aware of the VictimFocus Charter Pledge and had brought the motion to full council on behalf of a leading Charity and hoped that it would be supported by all Members. She gave details of a case where a young girl became a victim and the injustice she suffered as a result and hoped that by bringing the matter to the council's attention and the signing of the pledge action could be taken to help address the situation.
- 68.16 Councillor Cattell formally seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.
- 68.17 Councillor Nemeth moved an amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group and stated that the Group was against victim blaming. However, he felt that there was a paradox for the Administration in dealing with a perceived problem in-house and how that was addressed; whilst seeking to support the Charter. Any responsible organisation had a duty to follow basic principles in relation to their staff and if the amendment was to fall he would have concerns for the council's staff.
- 68.18 Councillor Ann Norman formally seconded the amendment and thanked Councillor Daniel for bringing the motion to the council meeting. There were a number of sensible reasons as to why the council as an organisation should challenge victim blaming and ensure staff did not engage in any shape or form. She hoped that the council could ensure any such culture was not supported and that it would share knowledge and best practice with partner organisations.

68.19 Councillor Littman stated that supported the motion and noted that there was a significant bias toward victim blaming for women and girls and hoped that the Administration would reconsider proposals to cut the Domestic & Sexual Abuse Service.

68.20 Councillor Cattell stated that as a volunteer on a domestic abuse helpline she was contacted by numerous women who suffer from abuse and inevitably experience trauma, which requires specialist training to help. She fully supported the motion and hoped it would be supported unanimously.

68.21 Councillor Daniel noted the comments and sated that she could not accept the amendment and hoped that the motion as proposed could be supported.

68.22 The Mayor noted that the amendment had not been accepted and put it to the vote which was lost by 19 votes to 27.

68.23 The Mayor then put the following motion as amended to the vote:

“This council resolves to:

1. Show its support to the VictimFocus Charter Pledge by signing up to it, and
2. Request officers to bring a report to the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities Committee to detail how that pledge can then be fulfilled to challenge and reduce victim blaming of people who have experienced trauma, abuse or crime in our organisation.”

68.24 The Mayor confirmed that the motion had been agreed unanimously.

NOTICE OF MOTION**LABOUR AND COOPERATIVE GROUP****ENDING VICTIM BLAMING TOGETHER**

This council resolves to:

1. Show its support to the VictimFocus Charter Pledge by signing up to it, and
2. Request officers to bring a report to the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities Committee to detail how that pledge can then be fulfilled to challenge and reduce victim blaming of people who have experienced trauma, abuse or crime in our organisation.

Proposed by: Cllr Daniel

Seconded by: Cllr Cattell

Supporting information

By signing up to the Charter, we would be pledging that our staff and management team will commit themselves to:

1. Never engaging in victim blaming of people who have been affected by trauma, abuse or crime
2. Never using or advocating for interventions that blame or place responsibility of trauma, abuse or crime on the victim
3. Calling out victim blaming where we see it in the media or in policy
4. Ensuring that we create a culture in which victim blaming is not accepted on case records of the people we help and to amend or add comments to any case records that include victim blaming descriptions of our clients
5. Encouraging our partner agencies to reflect on interventions or approaches that place responsibility on victims of trauma, abuse or crime
6. Ensuring that our materials, service design and individual service delivery supports our clients with their feelings of self-blame and their experiences of victim blaming from our own staff and others
7. Learning more about victim blaming and self-blame to use this in policy, procedure and service development and evaluation
8. Standing up for and advocating on behalf of victims of trauma, abuse and crime who are being blamed or stigmatised by agencies, professionals or authorities
9. Providing ample training on victim blaming and self-blame to our staff members and management
10. Reflecting critically on our own practice and values to ensure that we have challenged any biases, values or views our organisation holds or acts upon that blame victims of trauma, abuse and crime.

<https://www.victimfocus.org.uk/victimfocus-membership>

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Council | Agenda Item 68(2) |
| 31 st January 2019 | Brighton & Hove City Council |

NOTICE OF MOTION

ENDING VICTIM BLAMING TOGETHER

CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT

That the motion be amended to delete the words as struck through and insert those shown in ***bold italic***.

This council ~~resolves to:~~

1. ***Notes with sadness the delay in signing*** ~~Show its support to the VictimFocus Charter Pledge~~ ***and agrees to move forward with cross-party agreement*** by signing up to it, and
2. Requests officers to bring a report to the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities Committee to detail how that pledge can then be fulfilled ~~to challenge and reduce victim blaming of people who have experienced trauma, abuse or crime in our organisation~~ ***and***
3. ***Reassures staff and management teams that the Administration's inferred suggestion that members of staff and management have been engaging in widespread victim-blaming is not a widely-held view amongst Opposition Councillors.***

Proposed by: Cllr Nemeth

Seconded by: Cllr A Norman

Motion if carried to read:

This council ~~resolves to:~~

1. Notes with sadness the delay in signing the VictimFocus Charter Pledge and agrees to move forward with cross-party agreement by signing up to it, and
2. Requests officers to bring a report to the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities Committee to detail how that pledge can then be fulfilled; and
3. Reassures staff and management teams that the Administration's inferred suggestion that members of staff and management have been engaging in widespread victim-blaming is not a widely-held view amongst Opposition Councillors.

