

# **TOURISM, EQUALITIES, COMMUNITIES & CULTURE COMMITTEE ADDENDUM 1**

**4.00PM, THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2023**

**HOVE TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER**

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# ADDENDUM 1

ITEM		Page
56	<b>PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT</b>	5 - 8
	<b>Questions</b>	
	Nicola Benghe – <i>Domestic Abuse Services</i>	
	Ruth Farnell – <i>Pan Sussex Voices Lived Experience Board</i>	
	Dani Ahrens – <i>Victim Support</i>	
	Leon Golstein – <i>St Catherine's Lodge</i>	
	<b>Deputations</b>	
	Dave Boyle - <i>Community Benefit Societies and Eligibility for the Council's Third Sector Funding Pots</i>	



# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee

## Agenda Item 56 (B)

**Subject: Public Questions**

**Date of meeting: 9 March 2023**

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for questions submitted by a member of the public.

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

The following written questions have been received from members of the public:

### **(1) Nicola Benge – Domestic Abuse Services**

Providers, Victim Support and Stonewater Housing Association, have now completed two years of their domestic abuse services contract in Brighton & Hove.

Please could you let us know what publicity, marketing and leaflets have been developed to let residents and potential service users know about their services?

#### **Supplementary:**

In the announcement of the new provider in early 2021 the Council Website stated:

"The service will include a programme of education, training, and community activities to promote safe and healthy relationships and the wider support services available. "

I can't find any details of these programmes, please could you let us know what they are and how to find them.

### **(2) Ruth Farnell – Pan Sussex Voices Lived Experience Board**

WRT Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services. How is the Pan Sussex Voices Lived Experience Board going, and has there been feedback that has impacted the services and changed how they are being delivered?

### **(3) Dani Ahrens – Victim Support**

How many service users did Victim Support work with from the start of the contract on 1st April 2021 to date? What was the quarter on quarter increase? Do you have a breakdown of service users by sex and by protected characteristic and were these numbers in line with the contract expectations?

#### **(4) Leon Golstein – St Catherine’s Lodge**

For a property to be recognised as particular or special, it must necessarily stand out qualitatively, in appearance, rarity, local significance, or public memory. The notable 17C house once on that site was completely demolished decades prior to 1900. The site is now a 1920’s hotel, made up of a mismatched hotchpot of cheaply constructed houses, extensions, utilitarian corridors, and spartan rooms added at various times. The “Dutch Gable” facia is not architecturally authentic, because it incorporates only poorly finished fragments of the true Dutch gable style.

As no part of the original and historically significant house remains, would not a blue badge or information plaque suffice to tell the story of what once stood there?

#### **Supplementary:**

In what way can this mismatch of replacement structures be said to be held in high regard by the local community, or benefit the area?

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Tourism, Equalities, Communities, & Culture Committee

## Agenda Item 56 (C)

**Subject: Deputations**

**Date of meeting: 9 March 2022**

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public.

The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

### **1) Deputation: Community Benefit Societies and Eligibility for the Council's Third Sector Funding Pots**

The Council's various third sector funds currently accept application from a variety of not-for-profit structures – charities, community interest companies – but community benefit societies (CBS) are deemed ineligible.

Community Benefit Societies are a form of not-for-profit enterprise established in law in 1936, arising out of the co-operative and mutual sector for which they have been the used for enterprises run on democratic basis. Indeed, they are, along with co-operatives, the go-to legal structures recommended by Community Wealth Building practitioners and institutions. Several CBS in the city had applied for funding and been rejected.

After we lobbied Councillor Powell in 2021, Officers were asked to review this matter, and a report went to the Members Advisory Group in September 2021 presenting 2 options:

- Continue to exclude CBSs from eligibility on the grounds that they can pay interest to members
- Allow all CBSs to apply to the fund provided they have a statutory-strength asset lock

The report recommended option 2; the Members asked for a report on the activities of CBSs in the city to come before the December 2021 meeting of the MAG.

This subsequent report recommended the same two options as the September report, with a new third option allowing eligibility for those CBS which were not paying interest to members for the use of their capital. Regrettably, the Members Advisory Group chose the first of these options.

As a result, BHCC is – to my knowledge as a professional advisor to non-profits - the only council that excludes Community Benefit Societies. Perversely, despite them being recognised as not-for-profit structures by:

- HM Revenue and Customs
- The Financial Conduct Authority
- HM Treasury

- UK statutory legislation (eg Income Tax Act 2007 as amended in in 2014, Localism Act 2011)
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- The England and Wales Charity Commission
- The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator
- The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
- National Lotteries Fund
- Architectural Heritage Fund
- Crown Commercial Service
- Scottish Land Fund

As a result, a CBS can receive a capital and revenue grant of £300,000 from central governments, be funded by the National Lottery, charitable foundations, receive investment tax reliefs targeted at not-for-profits, gift aid, be recognised for nominating assets of community value, but are not eligible for Brighton and Hove's Community Fund.

BHCC continues to cleave to the notion that all the above institutions are wrong, and it is right. The reason why all these bodies take one view, and BHCC take another is based on the latter's fundamental misconception of the nature of interest. In a CBS, members who make financial contributions to the common capital of the society are able to receive an interest payment; this is capped by the FCA. Which is the registrar for such societies. BHCC believes this is a profit distribution. Every single other body does not.

The impacts of the exclusion have prevented organisations active in the city delivering impactful activity – aligned strongly with the council's own agenda – from undertaking more of that activity. The Bevy Pub – recognised as a shining light by a multitude of national and international organisations – was prevented from running a project with Brighton Permaculture Trust to plant trees around Moulescoomb and Bevendean.

Coldean Community Organisation were prevented from securing running costs from the Resilience Fund to help advance their plans for community-led housing (naturally, such housing is at the heart of desired outcomes from the Council's Community Wealth Building agenda, but the Council appears not to have told the Council in a classic failure of joined-up policy making).

We request the Council to revisit this matter urgently and bring its understanding into line with everyone else.

**Supported by:**

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