Brighton & Hove City Council

COUNCIL
ADDENDUM 2

4.30PM, THURSDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

ADDENDUM

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COUNCIL MINUTES

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 26 MARCH 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Grimshaw (Chair), Asaduzzaman, Alexander, Allen, Bagaeen, Baghoth, Cattell, Daniel, Davis, Earthey, Evans, Fishleigh, Fowler, Galvin, Goddard, Guilmant, Helliwell, Hewitt, Hill, Hogan, Lademacher, Lyons, Mackey, McGregor, McLeay, McNair, Meadows, Miller, Muten, Nann, Oliveira, Parrott, Pickett, Robins, Robinson, Rowkins, Sankey, Shanks, Sheard, Simon, Taylor, C Theobald, Thomson, Wilkinson, Winder and Williams

PART ONE

95 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

95.1 Councillor Fishleigh declared an interest in Item 98, in relation to the petition concerning annual charging for watercraft at Saltdean Beach, as she kept a kayak on Saltdean Beach.

96 MINUTES

96.1 The minutes of the previous Council meeting 12th December 2025, as set out in the agenda, were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

97 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

97.1 The Mayor gave the following communications:

Good afternoon, Councillors, colleagues, and residents. It’s a real pleasure to be with you all today, at my last ordinary Full Council as Mayor. This past month has been an absolute whirlwind filled with visits, events, receptions, and of course, plenty of fun.

I began the month cheering on runners at Brighton’s Half Marathon in true British style: wind, rain, and unwavering enthusiasm. I was delighted to attend the Sussex Beacon’s postrace event at The Grand Hotel and had the honour of handing out medals to the incredible runners who raised thousands of pounds to support people across our city and county living with HIV.

I was equally honoured to speak at our city's Iftar Dinner, hosted by The Dialogue Society. It was a privilege to break fast together as a community, offering a moment to reflect, renew our sense of purpose, and strengthen the bonds that connect us.

I also attended a magnificent fundraising gala hosted by one of my mayoral charities, Rockinghorse. It was an extraordinary evening beautifully organised, full of imagination, and brimming with energy. The Corn Exchange looked stunning, and the atmosphere was truly magical. The event raised thousands of pounds to help ensure Rockinghorse can continue its vital work supporting babies, children, and young people navigating illness.

Other highlights included celebrating Nightcap's first anniversary running the i360; attending the Commonwealth Day Service in London where I laid a wreath on behalf of our city; visiting the team at the Volk's Railway ahead of its reopening for the new season on 28 March; and hosting an event in the Council Chamber with the Pride Community Foundation, aimed at encouraging LGBTQI+ residents to consider a future in politics and public service.

A particular highlight not just for March, but for my entire mayoralty was hosting a reception at Brighton Town Hall to mark International Women's Day. I had the privilege of holding an "in conversation" event with my dear friend and mentor, Baroness Joyce Gould. It was deeply inspiring to hear about Joyce's remarkable career, her influence on public policy, her tireless work advancing the rights of women and the LGBTQI+ community, and the standing ovation she received when speaking about her successful fight to abolish Section 28. The room was filled with women from across our city, aged from fifteen to ninety-six - determined, brilliant, and strong. It was an honour to be in their company.

As I enter the final eight weeks of my mayoralty, I am very much looking forward to hosting a charity dog walk on the seafront with my mayoral charities; attending the Royal British Legion's annual conference; cheering on Brighton & Hove Albion Women at a home match; welcoming various cadet groups, charities, and local champions to the Mayor's Parlour; and, I am sure, enjoying plenty more laughter, dancing, and fun along the way.

98 PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS

98.1 The Mayor stated that three ordinary petitions had been received.

98.2 Emma Winder presented a petition titled 'Safer crossings on Hollingbury Road'.

Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure, replied:

Thank you for your petition and highlighting your concerns about road safety and a need for a safer pedestrian crossing on Hollingbury Road and Hollingbury Crescent.

The good news is that we are listening. We are aware of your concerns. We recently assessed this location as part of our Safer, Better Streets programme and we agree there is a need, recognising improvements could benefit vulnerable road users and the wider community. We have recently added Hollingbury Road junction with Hollingbury Crescent to our Safer Better Streets programme, currently No.32 on our published list.

We will continue to work through the list in priority order, considering feasibility, deliverability and resource availability. The location near 80 Hollingbury Road can be reassessed in line with our Safer, Better Streets assessment process. Traffic calming measures already exist, and we apply strict thresholds relating to traffic flow, pedestrian volumes, collision history, visibility standards, and road geometry for these higher-level measures. As at present the location does not meet all these requirements, it is unlikely that the location would meet the criteria required for additional interventions such as a zebra crossing.

However, although traffic calming measures are already in place in this area, we appreciate that some features, particularly the existing road markings on the speed humps would benefit from renewal. We will arrange for these to be refreshed as part of our routine road lining maintenance programme and this site will remain under review as part of our wider road safety programme.

I cannot understate the importance of having ward councillors continued support for proposed Safer Better Streets schemes all the way through completion. For many years, another local community supported by previous ward Councillors called for safety improvements in Hove's Court Farm Road. As on every scheme, I attend the ward councillors' briefings to confirm no concerns and ensure requested design changes are responded to ahead of going to public consultation. Sadly, it wasn't until public consultation was live earlier this year did ward councillors then decide to campaign against the proposed safety improvements in their ward.

So may I credit Cllr Fowler for her support for your request. We appreciate the time and effort residents have taken to raise these concerns. Your feedback will continue to inform our future safety planning across the city.

98.3 The petition was noted.

98.4 The Mayor advised that Daniel Cobby was not in attendance to present the petition titled 'Saunders Park View' and had asked to receive a written response.

98.5 Councillor Fishleigh, on behalf of David Marcar, presented a petition titled 'Annual charging for Watercraft owner Saltdean Beach'.

Councillor Miller, Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage & Tourism, replied:

These fees are formally approved at Budget Council each year, alongside all other council charges and are updated in line with inflationary increases. During the Covid pandemic, active collection of these particular storage fees was paused. The Seafront Office is now reinstating the permit system so that all beach locations are managed consistently and in line with the approved budget framework.

The council also has a statutory duty to ensure value for money in the use of council land. Where individuals make exclusive or long-term use of a defined area of council-owned space, a charge is required to ensure fairness and to avoid subsidising private storage through general public funds. Charging for the storage of small craft is common practice among local authorities, and we are not able to apply charges in one location but omit them in another, as

this would be inconsistent, inequitable and contrary to the council's approved fees and charges policy.

We understand the view expressed by several residents that Saltdean's informal storage area originated from community use and that the craft are kept there at owners' risk. We also appreciate the point that many kayaks are low-cost or second-hand and that users value the affordability of the activity. However, where storage occupies public land on a long-term basis, the council must ensure there is a transparent and consistent permitting structure across all seafront locations. Without this it would be difficult to manage competing uses of space or to address issues that arise from abandoned or deteriorating craft.

Some residents have also raised concerns regarding enforcement. The intention of the permit system is not to create a heavy enforcement presence but to enable clearer management of the beach environment. The previous signage at Saltdean, which asked owners to remove craft during winter, proved difficult to maintain without an accompanying system to identify ownership. A permit approach supports better communication with users, ensures consistent expectations and helps us to address problems such as abandoned or unsafe equipment more effectively.

Regarding the number of kayaks stored at Saltdean, we recognise that the current volume is modest. Nonetheless, the principle of value for public land applies regardless of scale and the council must apply the same policy fairly across all storage sites. The revenue raised forms part of the broader seafront services budget, which supports maintenance, safety and management across the entire coastline.

We acknowledge the disappointment that some residents have expressed, both directly and on social media, and we will ensure all feedback is considered as part of the ongoing review of how the permit system is communicated and implemented. Our intention is not to discourage responsible sea access but to ensure that facilities are managed fairly, consistently and in a way that balances the interests of all beach users.

98.6 The petition was noted.

99 LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

99.1 The Leader of the Council gave the following announcement:

Thank you, Madam Mayor, and good afternoon everyone.

I want to start today's meeting by condemning the antisemitic attack on community ambulances in North London. An attack on one is an attack on all, and I know that the impact of this will be felt by our Jewish communities in particular across the city.

Closest to home, I note that the police investigation into the arson attack on Peacehaven Mosque is moving forward and, as previously noted, we will be rolling out antisemitism and Islamophobia training across the Council.

Yesterday, colleagues, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government wrote to me and council leaders across Sussex to set out the next steps for local government reorganisation.

I am pleased that the Government is supportive of many aspects of our proposal, including our proposed merging with Peacehaven, Telscombe, East Saltdean and Falmer, and also our proposal for a West Sussex Coastal Authority.

The Government has been clear that they have concerns about the complexity of some of our proposals and the disaggregation of services in East Sussex, so they will now be consulting on a four-unitary option.

I welcome the Government's thoughtful approach and hope that we can take this opportunity to find greater consensus and compromise across the region. I am also pleased that we are still on track for unitary elections in May 2027 and vesting of the new unitary authorities in May 2028.

I'm pleased that capacity funding will be provided to councils to implement the final shape of the plans. Key to our thinking is creating evenly balanced unitary authorities to sit as equals around a new mayoral authority, and I think the Government has embraced this principle in its proposals.

On devolution, there is more good news. Our statutory instrument creating a Combined County Authority for Sussex and Brighton has finished its passage in Parliament this week.

We have been recognised by Government in their guidance for mayors for our circular economy work.

This week, we have also launched a report commissioned by the Greater Brighton Economic Board, which I chair, on economic opportunities for our region with devolution coming down the track.

They have identified seven priority areas, which include embedding the Sussex Energy Mission as a cornerstone to delivery; ensuring the adequate provision of employment space to meet business needs right across Sussex; raising productivity levels and supporting sectoral growth; developing an investment prospectus for Sussex; delivering a long-term affordable, sustainable housing strategy for the whole of our area; developing a vision for Newhaven and Shoreham ports to lead economic diversification; and leveraging major projects to drive local economic value.

We have responded to the Government's consultation on the proposed overnight visitor levy, arguing that local authorities should retain 100% of the income. And we welcome the Chancellor's May lecture, where she indicated that further fiscal devolution is on the way.

On buses, we have announced that we are applying to the Government for capacity funding to explore bus franchising. We have one of the best bus networks in the country, but currently millions of pounds goes out of our city every year into the pockets of shareholders while fares are going up.

We want to explore taking buses back under public control, with a view to a more integrated bus service across Sussex as we devolve. We have committed to improvements in mobility across the city, with £9 million to be spent in the next 12 months on improving city bus services, keeping fares affordable for families who rely on bus travel and for those most in need of affordable transport.

As part of that, we have announced that from this September our care leavers aged 18 to 25 will travel free on all of our buses across the city. We have protected the free accompanied bus fare offer for under-18s, and we will be doing work now to consider whether we can offer subsidised fares for school travel for children eligible for free school meals.

We have taken forward actions agreed in the Notice of Motion on divestment last autumn, and I have written to all of the East Sussex Pension Fund Committee members — Green, Liberal Democrat and Conservative — to seek their support in divesting from companies operating in the West Bank. Last month, I also visited Palestinian scholarship students at the University of Sussex to welcome them to Brighton and Hove.

Since we last met here in January, we have had a further meeting of our One Voice partnership. I am so pleased to see this forum working well again and giving the opportunity for community cohesion issues to be raised by those most affected.

We have invested almost £2 million in early years and launched our Best Start in Life Strategy so that every child in the city has the best start in life. We have had a very successful National School Offer Day, with more students receiving their first-preference secondary school than last year.

Significant numbers of children used our free school meal priority and our new open admissions option. Interestingly, children in central wards opted for schools in single-catchment areas, so there was movement in both directions, showing, we think, that more choice benefits all.

All the while, none of the so-called displacement took place — unfounded fears that this Chamber has previously heard much about. Last week at Cabinet, we welcomed the Government's £20 million investment in Whitehawk through their Pride in Place programme, and we are currently recruiting a chair. This is going to be a grassroots, community-led initiative that we will support.

We also paid tribute to the amazing residents in our LPS blocks at Cabinet last week, as we took the decision on the wholesale redevelopment of these blocks.

We have committed to continuing our person-first support for residents as we move through this process, through rehousing and also the right to return once the new homes are complete.

We also paid tribute to teachers, children and families at Middle Street Primary School following the sad but necessary decision to issue statutory notices for school closure, and we have authorised an independent review into the series of events that have led the school to its current position.

On housing, in the last year we have brought 264 empty homes back into use.

We have seen a boost in tenant satisfaction, with repairs now moving from 68% to 77% of tenants satisfied, and on the listening and acting measure we have gone from 53% to 63% — our listening council in action. We have made great progress on building our own temporary accommodation and converting our own temporary accommodation.

We have been changing student HMOs back into family homes, and we can announce that we have just received over £9 million of new funding from Government for more purchase of council and temporary accommodation, recognising that we are making good progress and they want to support us to make more. We have invested £4 million in a new Crisis and Resilience Fund to support families in the city, taking a preventative approach where possible. We have stepped up our action to repair the city's roads and pavements, a problem that has been affecting roads right up and down the country. In January, we repaired over 1,000 potholes. In February, 1,300 potholes, and that is set to increase again in March. We have quadrupled the number of teams repairing our roads.

On look and feel, we have announced an overnight street service tackling graffiti, chewing gum and jet washing. We have reduced the bulky waste charge from £60 to £25 to try and address fly-tipping. We have taken a new approach to environmental enforcement, working with small businesses rather than taking an overly punitive approach.

We have had a big clean-up in Kemptown, with a great impact on the local community there. I had a really successful Leader's Surgery in Kemptown, meeting businesses and residents, and I will be in Moulsecoomb doing the same next month. We have completed the rollout of food waste.

We have applied for planning permission for the King Alfred and committed to replacing the seafront paddling pool. We have started work on the new bus and cycle lane on the A23 and started investment in the maintenance of our seafront arches.

Today, we have got a really important agenda to consider, Madam Mayor, from vital public engagement to considering our Pay Policy Statement, our Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy, and appointments to outside bodies and partnerships.

And through four Notices of Motion, we will debate the kind of city that we want to be, considering affordable housing on the Brighton General Hospital site, the suitable

maintenance of 3G pitches and the use of crumb rubber in the city, the role of community support and food banks, and access to toilet facilities.

I wish everyone a productive meeting tonight.

100 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

100.1 The Mayor reported that 11 written questions had been received from members of the public.

1. On behalf of Robert Brown, Kim Leyland Walker asked:

This current administration promised "Reliable rubbish collection." where they "will review where communal rubbish bins are placed and consult with residents and business owners on where they could be better sited." – this is not the case in Kemptown Ward.

Residents frequently have to deal with overflowing bins, a lack of regular collections and a 'who knows when' approach to reporting overflowed bins waiting for them to be emptied and not once have we been consulted on where bins should be placed. Instead, Kemptown Ward have had many bins taken away and not replaced.

There also continues to be no KPIs with which to monitor performance. Will this administration confirm when they will:

a) consult local businesses and residents on where they feel communal bins should be located and;

b) renegotiate contracts for refuse collections and share what the KPIs are to ensure transparency.

Reply from Councillor Rowkins:

A couple of things to just correct and clarify. First, our waste collection service is not in fact contracted out, but delivered in-house. Also, the KPIs of a whole range of council services, including waste collections, are reported and shared publicly on a regular basis.

We certainly did promise more reliable collections, and we are delivering just that. Sorting this service out after years in the wilderness has been a major undertaking – but the culture change, the investment in vehicles and equipment, the modernisation of systems, the real-time information for residents, are all now contributing to collection success rates of well over 99% that are now routine.

But yes, communal bins are a problem. We know all too well the impact they can have on residents in Kemptown and elsewhere when a collection is missed, and indeed we saw that impact in January. Let me spell out why that was: The communal bins in Kemptown, like most others, are the large 3200L units. These bins can only be lifted and emptied by specialist vehicles. We currently have 3 communal refuse rounds, and 5 vehicles to cover them. Even with the 2 spares, when you factor in planned maintenance as well as just the law of averages, there will be times when we are not able to field all 3 rounds.

We have an increasing range of mitigations in place for when that does happen, but ultimately for me, that is not an acceptable level of vulnerability and, as such, we are currently looking at options to reduce our reliance on these bins and the vehicles needed to empty them.

As for the locations of individual bins, I am certainly aware of conversations currently underway with individual businesses and residents, and we will look at locations as part of the broader review. But I want to be really clear about what our priorities are – what I have been working on is the big picture, the fundamentals, the structural and cultural issues that have plagued the service for so long, and I believe that is exactly what residents want us to be doing.

Kim Leyland Walker asked a supplementary question:

Could the published KPIs be shared with Robert Brown, and is there a particular collection schedule for the area going forward?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

The KPIs would be forwarded. Councillor Rowkins clarified that earlier website wording had wrongly suggested communal bins were only emptied when reported full. Communal rounds visit bins routinely, with most locations visited daily, and residents do not need to report a bin before it is emptied.

2. Daniel Harris was not present at the meeting to ask the question.

3. Helen Dawson asked:

Avenue Bridge Club is looking for a permanent base in Hove. Our activities fit exactly with the Council's objectives for the King Alfred re-development area. Is it possible for the club to lease dedicated space within the new building and how could this happen?

We have been based in Hove for over 50 years, largely in Third Avenue premises which were sold in 2022. We are now a registered charity, with 180+ members and open to anybody who has an interest in bridge. We cater for all levels of expertise and run playing sessions and a comprehensive teaching programme.

Reply from Councillor Robins:

In addition to its larger swimming pools, extensive new health suite, and six court sports hall, the new King Alfred facility will feature a range of flexible spaces to meet community needs. The plans feature a community room on the ground floor which can be hired for activities such as the bridge club's meetings. For larger scale events there are two studios on the first floor, which will also be available for sports clubs and community groups to hire.

Helen Dawson asked a supplementary question:

The Club was seeking a permanent home rather than a room hired alongside other users. If dedicated space was not possible in the new development, could the Club discuss other council-owned spaces?

Councillor Robins replied:

He was happy to continue the discussion and would speak to the relevant sports officers about whether another suitable space might be available, although he could not make any commitment at that stage.

4. Mike Goodrich asked:

The only public toilets between the volks railway station by the marina and the pier volks station are located within the children's Peter Pan playground. Those toilets are not set up for adult use. The promenade is heavily used day and night and the lack of toilets has lead to fouling on the beach. What are the councils plans to change this?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins:

Well we love toilets in this administration – and with 13 reopened, the 14th reopening next Thursday, 9 refurbished, plus major accessibility improvements, I think we have a pretty decent record.

But I absolutely hear the concerns about the lack of public toilet provision along the stretch between the Volks Railway Marina Station and the Pier Station. The toilets at the Peter Pan Playground are obviously handy for families with kids, but not really suitable for general adult use, and of course that part of the seafront does experience high footfall, particularly in the summer.

The public toilets at Black Rock have now been fully refurbished and reopened, following a £366,000 project delivered jointly by Brighton & Hove City Council and Southern Water.

Whilst there are no specific plans to open additional toilets between the Marina and the Pier at this stage, it is certanly something we'll consider as part of the broader vision and regeneration of the Eastern Seafront.

Mike Goodrich asked a supplementary question:

Was there any indicative timescale for providing an additional public toilet on this stretch of the seafront?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

There was no specific timescale at present. The first stage of the Madeira Terraces work was focused on restoration and attracting further investment, but additional toilet provision remained an issue the Council wished to consider as the plans progressed.

5. Sarah Gorton was not present at the meeting to ask the question.

6. On behalf of Sheila Rimmer, David Gibson asked:

The councils reserves have been run down so much and the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation has risen costing an estimated £5 million this year alone. All

this has lead to pleas to government to bail the council out to rebuild reserves and pay for homeless overspends.

Given that government says that austerity is over, please can you explain which of the following factors and council decisions have contributed to the deterioration in council finances?

Excessive cuts to council staff leaving insufficient capacity to deliver council services damaging income collection.

Reduced council housing allocations to homeless households in temporary and emergency accommodation contributing to soaring numbers and costs.

Falling HRA rent collection rates currently costing around £1.5 million a year.

Selling off too many council assets, "family silver" which previously provided a steady income for the council coffers.

Reply from Councillor Williams:

The council is facing sustained and growing pressure across its services, driven by rising demand, increasing complexity of need, and costs that have risen faster than available funding. These pressures are most visible in homelessness, where more households are seeking help, staying longer in temporary accommodation, and requiring more support, at a time when the supply of affordable housing is severely constrained.

Meeting these statutory duties has increasingly relied on short-term, high-cost solutions, particularly nightly-paid accommodation, which has placed significant strain on the council's finances and reduced resilience. The challenge is not simply the scale of demand, but the cost of responding to it under existing arrangements.

In response, the council is reshaping how it meets need so that services are both effective and financially sustainable. This includes reducing reliance on the most expensive forms of temporary accommodation, increasing access to more stable and lower-cost options such as council-owned and block-booked homes, and improving how costs are recovered. At the same time, the council is strengthening prevention, supporting people to move on more quickly into settled housing, and improving income collection to reduce ongoing pressure.

Together, these actions are designed to manage rising demand, control costs, reduce reliance on reserves, and put the council on a more sustainable footing while continuing to protect vulnerable residents.

David Gibson asked a supplementary question:

Other councils affected by the move to Universal Credit appeared to be improving rent collection, and further explanation was requested about the rise in homelessness and the factors contributing to it.

Councillor Taylor replied:

He said reserves were being rebuilt through the recently agreed budget. Homelessness demand had increased locally and elsewhere, with one contributing factor being landlords

leaving or selling in advance of changes to Section 21 under the Renters' Rights reforms. The Council was seeking to purchase more properties and expand council-owned social and temporary accommodation.

7. Diane Montgomery asked:

I met a young couple who in good faith bought a share of a one-bedroom home in Lewes Road Brighton. They diligently saved the £6000 deposit, along with help from family. Their service charge rocketed from £130 to £450 per month in three years. Both have average income jobs and have since had a child and need a larger home. They can't sell as who wants to buy a part of a property with an ever-growing service charge, pay rent and a mortgage on top. They are under stress due to the increase, being trapped in a property that no longer meets their needs. This is not what they were promised.

Given the council agrees that shared ownership is not an affordable housing offer, and doesn't reduce housing waiting lists, will you publicise the risks, so others do not become trapped like this couple?

Reply from Councillor Williams:

I am sorry to hear of the difficulties this family have experienced. Shared ownership can be a good option for some households who want to get onto the housing ladder but service charge increases can be a concern and it is important that prospective buyers are aware of potential costs and can factor this into their decision making. Some Registered Providers operating in Brighton are now changing their approach to setting service charges to avoid sudden increases and improving their communication to residents. In addition, in June 2025 the Shared Ownership Code was launched which is a voluntary set of standards to improve consumer protection, service quality and transparency with the shared ownership sector in England. A key feature of the code is service charge transparency and highlights that a service charge intervention document should be issued which details initial charges, projected increases and asset management plans. It's important that Registered Providers communicate early and transparently about charges and we would expect them to offer guidance and support if a resident is experiencing financial difficulty.

Diane Montgomery asked a supplementary question:

Would shared ownership cease to count towards developers' affordable housing requirements, and would developers be prevented from using viability arguments to avoid providing genuinely affordable housing?

Councillor Williams replied:

She explained that the detailed planning questions were outside her portfolio and asked for them to be submitted in writing so that they could be forwarded to the relevant officers.

8. Alison Woolfenden asked:

The Council's new Constitution requires public questions be submitted two days before agenda and reports are published. Effectively, residents are expected to ask questions about decisions and reports they have not seen.

That doesn't enable scrutiny; it turns public participation into guesswork. It risks excluding residents —those who want to read reports, understand proposals, or who aren't familiar with council procedures. A system that only works for insiders isn't an inclusive one.

Until recently, residents could submit questions 48 hours after the agenda was published—I did so myself last year. The Council has already acknowledged that this rule is flawed for Scrutiny Committees and has corrected it.

If the rule is recognised as flawed elsewhere, why is Full Council—the city's highest decision-making body—still operating under it, and will you commit tonight to restoring the 48-hour post-publication deadline and confirming when the Constitution will be amended?

Reply from Councillor Sankey:

Many thanks for your question.

As you have highlighted, there are a range of opportunities for members of the public to engage with the Council decision making in our Committee, Cabinet and other meetings.

At Cabinet and Scrutiny, we have ensured that the publication deadlines enable public questions to relate to items on the agenda of the meeting. For full Council, we receive a very wide range and number of public representations and these do not need to relate to items on the agenda. Our longer deadlines for this meeting are in place to ensure we have time to prepare full responses and manage the volume of representations received.

However, I do support your request to review these deadlines to allow for public questions to be raised on reports on the agenda for full Council. I have therefore asked officers to bring forward proposals to enable this adjustment to be made. I anticipate we will have a report to address this at our next ordinary full Council meeting in July. My aim is to ensure that members of the public feel fully able to engage in all of our public Council meetings and I am grateful to you for bringing this issue to full Council today.

Alison Woolfenden asked a supplementary question:

Could the timeframe for changing the public question deadline be confirmed?

Councillor Sankey replied:

A report proposing the necessary constitutional change would be brought to the next ordinary Full Council meeting in July 2026.

9. Lynora Knott asked:

Recent figures show that under the current administration the number of homeless households in temporary and emergency accommodation has increased by over 250. Life in private temporary and emergency homeless accommodation is insecure and unhealthy. It is very costly. Recent estimates of cost to the council are around £5m and have caused the council to ask government for bailout loans. As a critical friend the Living Rent Campaign welcomes that the council is looking to increase the allocations for homeless households and is continuing with and expanding the previous approach buying of blocks for temporary homeless accommodation. No stone should be left unturned which is why we are asking the council to further alleviate this crisis by designating a greater percentage of home purchase purchases as temporary accommodation until the number of households in temporary accommodation have fallen back to the levels inherited in 2023 will this be considered?

Reply from Councillor Williams:

Supplying new council owned temporary accommodation is one of a number of ways we are tackling the crisis. We continue to buy back homes for temporary accommodation where purchases are viable and also deliver new homes. In 2025/26 we have delivered 43 homes including 11 new homes through refurbishing a former office block at Palace Place. In 2026/27 we are increasing our target with initial plans to deliver 70 homes through a mixture of buy backs and block purchases and will be utilising the Local Authority Housing Fund to support some of these purchases and the £10m of seed funding for temporary accommodation acqusitions agreed at October Cabinet We will in addition be reviewing other ways for us to accelerate our acquisitions programme.

Lynora Knott asked a supplementary question:

What safeguards were in place for particularly vulnerable people housed in temporary accommodation?

Councillor Williams replied:

The Council had policies and safeguards in place and assessed the circumstances and vulnerability of people presenting as homeless carefully when considering appropriate placements.

10. David Gibson asked:

When asked about the need for step change increases in social housing grant, the Housing lead, Gill Williams stated that the £39 billion housing investment from over 10 years was exactly what we are wanting. Sadly if she looks at the detail, it isn't. The £39 billion spread over 10 years fund is not soley for more council homes and only provides for a maximum of 18,000 social homes a year. Yet since the Right to Buy around 45,000 council homes have been sold on average each year in England. To make an impact we need 90,000 additional homes a year. This could be actually achieved if the money already earmarked for social housing was brought forward to years 27/28-28/29. I know you agree with the need to urgently increase social housing to tackle the housing crisis. Will you raise this with government so they can make a real difference?

Reply from Councillor Williams:

Increasing the supply of council homes and other affordable housing in the city is a Housing Strategy and Council Plan priority.

We regularly engage with Government to increase access to funding streams that support the delivery of social housing in the city. For example, this ongoing engagement has enabled us to secure additional funding through the next phase of the Local Authority Housing Fund, increasing our allocation from £5 million to £9 million. This will help deliver much-needed homes for temporary accommodation and for families resettling from Afghanistan.

We are also working closely with Homes England on the Social & Affordable Homes Programme. They have expressed a strong interest in receiving bids for homes deliverable by 2029, which aligns well with our current development pipeline.

We will continue to pursue capital grants, enhanced concessionary borrowing rates, and greater financial flexibilities to ensure the council can deliver on its housing ambitions.

Delivering additional council homes continues to be supported through the Housing Revenue Account Capital Investment Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31. The budget forecast includes the council's commitment to a further 496 homes over the 5-year period in total. The council anticipates above target delivery of 140 additional council homes in 2025/26. This includes homes acquired through our successful Home Purchase scheme where we buy back ex-RTB homes.

David Gibson asked a supplementary question:

It was suggested that government should make very low-interest lending available directly to councils, rather than only to private registered providers, to help increase social housing delivery. No further response was requested.

11. Ian Needham asked:

Key worker housing is clearly needed, given that private rents in Brighton and Hove are comparable to those in London (and given that government in England is still refusing to bring in rent controls). The Living Rent campaign argues that key worker housing must be truly affordable and swallow no more than a third of income after tax. Given that typical incomes for key workers would be approximately:-

Nurse 35 K, Teacher 40K refuse collector 28K, and a care worker earns around 25K. Do you agree that rents for these key workers should be set at levels less than the Local Housing Allowance?

Reply from Councillor Williams:

Key workers play a vital role in keeping communities functioning — delivering essential services and ensuring they have access to stable, affordable homes helps maintain the resilience of these frontline services and strengthens the wellbeing of the wider community. Ensuring rents are affordable is essential to achieving this. Recent Build to Rent schemes in the city have offered discounted market rent homes and the council have set local criteria for who can benefit from these homes. This criteria includes local residency, incomes caps, people with a disability or those in a eligible profession which includes essential workers.

Ian Needham asked a supplementary question:

If the principle of genuinely affordable key-worker rents was supported, when would that position be put in writing?

Councillor Williams replied:

She reiterated that she had already written to the Secretary of State for Housing requesting a Rent Commission to address issues of rental affordability.

101 DEPUTATIONS

101.1 The Mayor reported that two deputations had been received from members of the public.

101.2 Clare Jones presented a deputation concerning the 'Community Campaign for the Brighton General Hospital Site'.

Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration, replied:

The administration wanted the Council to acquire the Brighton General Hospital site and deliver a significant amount of social housing on it.

He confirmed that he had already spoken to the city's MPs about the site and would continue to press the case for social and affordable housing.

He was willing to work with the community campaign on the development of a people's plan. He also referred to the Council's recently agreed planning guidance favouring social and affordable rented housing over shared ownership, while noting that the final tenure mix would depend on the planning process unless the Council acquired the site itself.

He also agreed that considering the health impacts and health inequalities associated with different development options was a useful approach and undertook to explore how a health impact assessment might be taken forward.

101.3 The deputation was noted.

101.4 Patrick Ward presented a deputation concerning 'Urgent Concerns Regarding the Effect of Southdown/UOK Service Redesign on The Wellbeing Hub at Preston Park'.

101.5 As the deputation concerned the same subject as the first petition for debate under Item 102, the Mayor agreed that the response and debate would be taken together with that petition.

102 PETITIONS FOR DEBATE

102.1 The Mayor stated that two petitions had reached the threshold for debate at Full Council.

102.2 Ali Reeves and Cheryl Collins presented the petition for debate titled 'Petition to Save Our Service, SOS, the Wellbeing Hub'.

Councillor Alexander, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care, replied to the deputation and petition:

Thank you for your petition to save the Wellbeing Hub at Preston Park. We have had correspondence from residents, and we do understand the concerns.

The Preston Park Wellbeing hub is mainly funded by the NHS (over 80% of funding), however BHCC (via Public Health) funds community development, communications and training (approximately 20% of the contract).

In 2024 the funding for the hub was higher, with a total of £2.4m, of which 16% (£400k) came from the council's adult social care and public health departments combined, and £2m from the NHS.

When the contract was tendered out in 2025 the NHS reduced its funding, and as a council we also had to reduce funding. The new total value (for the contract starting October 2025) was £1.83m, made up of £1.5m from the NHS ICB (over 80%), and £270k from BHCC (under 20%, solely from the public health grant).

We do understand resident and service user concerns, but due to intense funding pressures – in particular for adult social care - in the council, we could not maintain the previous levels of support to the overall contract. We do have a range of other mental health support in the city, which can be viewed here:Finding help for your mental health in Brighton & Hove

We as a council acknowledge the serious problems facing mental health services, both in the NHS and in adult social care, as these services care for the most vulnerable in society.

Councillor Alexander additionally confirmed that the administration would raise the concerns with the NHS Integrated Care Board and would discuss with the Chairs of the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board the most appropriate route for further consideration.

102.3 Councillors Pickett, Hogan and Earthey spoke on the matter.

102.4 Councillor Alexander responded to the debate.

102.5 The recommendation to note the petition was carried unanimously. Council also agreed to note Patrick Ward's deputation.

102.6 Cathy Cooper presented the petition for debate titled 'Save Wellington House Learning Disability Day Centre in Brighton & Hove'.

Councillor Alexander replied:

Thank you for your petition highlighting your concerns about the proposal to close Wellington House Day Centre.

I understand that Wellington House is a longstanding and highly regarded service that provides activities for people with learning disabilities and much valued respite for families, and I realise that the prospect of potential change will be very unsettling for all involved. I must emphasise that the Council has taken a preliminary decision in relation to its budget only, fully aware that no decision will be made to close the service or otherwise, until a full consultation and detailed impact assessment have been undertaken, which will include an evaluation of the impact on those affected that attend the service, their families and carers, the services where people live and the staff that work at Wellington House. A consultation would not take place before the budget setting proposals have passed. The budget proposals did pass and so now we are preparing for the full consultation , which will launch in April and will run for 12 weeks.

102.7 Councillors Hill, Theobald and Earthey spoke on the matter.

102.8 Councillor Alexander responded to the debate.

102.9 RESOLVED:
That Council noted the petition.

103 CALL OVER FOR REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

103.1 The Democratic Services Manager undertook the call over.

103.2 The following items were reserved for discussion:
Item 106 - Appointment to Outside Bodies and Partnerships
Item 107 - Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2026-2029
Item 108 - Pay Policy Statement 2026-27

104 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

104.1 The Mayor noted that written questions from Members and the replies from the appropriate Councillor were taken as read by reference to the list included in Addendum 5.

105 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

105.1 The Mayor noted that 18 oral questions had been submitted and that 30 minutes was set aside for the item.

1. Councillor McNair asked:
asked why the Council had not identified and disclosed sooner that an email about school admission changes had failed to reach a number of parents, and why a resident's Freedom of Information request had been needed to uncover the issue.

Reply from Councillor Taylor:
He explained that the email had been sent but the size of the distribution list exceeded the system limit, causing some messages to bounce. The bounce-backs were then filed by another member of staff and the sender did not realise what had happened. He apologised for the error and said the team had learned from it.

Councillor McNair asked a supplementary question:

Would the admissions process be run again in case parents had made different school choices with the missing information?

Councillor Taylor replied:

No. The adjudicator's decision related only to two published admission number changes and did not affect the admissions process itself.

2. Councillor Fishleigh asked:

asked about the process for extending the bus Ultra Low Emission Zone to the Old Steine and St James's Street.

Reply from Councillor Muten:

He said he intended to recommend through the Enhanced Bus Partnership that buses operating through the city's Air Quality Management Areas should meet at least Euro 6 standards, including routes through the Old Steine, St James's Street and other identified corridors.

Councillor Fishleigh asked a supplementary question:

Could pollution be measured at the Old Steine and the operation of low-emission or electric buses adjusted so that cleaner operation covered the more polluted area?

Councillor Muten replied:

He said the ambition was broader than changing where individual buses switched modes: the aim was to secure compliant buses across all relevant Air Quality Management Areas, supported by incoming electric and other low-emission vehicles.

3. Councillor Asaduzzaman asked:

asked what preventative measures the Council and community partners could take to reduce racism, online hate and community tensions before incidents occurred.

Reply from Councillor Daniel:

She emphasised active civic leadership, allyship, partnership working and community cohesion, including the role of the One Voice partnership, and said the Council should challenge hateful narratives while improving awareness of reporting routes.

Councillor Asaduzzaman asked a supplementary question:

How could small businesses be better supported to report hate incidents and protect staff and customers, particularly where language barriers existed?

Councillor Daniel replied:

The Council would continue working with the Police and business networks to simplify and publicise reporting routes, including information in accessible formats and different languages, and would use trusted community groups and business associations to help overcome barriers.

4. Councillor De Oliveira asked:

asked what formal process had been put in place to reassess the risks of glyphosate use in public areas following the 2025 Global Glyphosate Study.

Reply from Councillor Rowkins:

He said the study's findings were concerning but needed to be understood in context, including the form and duration of exposure tested. The Council's policy was to reduce and minimise glyphosate use, with fewer applications, an expanded opt-out scheme and trials of alternatives.

Councillor De Oliveira asked a supplementary question:

What legal advice had been obtained about potential liability following subsequent challenges to research previously relied upon in assessing glyphosate safety?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

Local authorities relied on regulatory, safety and legal advice from the relevant national bodies, including agencies such as the Environment Agency and Health and Safety Executive, rather than creating separate local regulatory standards.

5. Councillor Meadows asked:

asked what the Council's consideration of a local-authority-led academy trust would mean for local authority schools.

Reply from Councillor Taylor:

He clarified that the Council was not seeking to become an academy. In light of the Government's direction towards stronger trusts, the Council was exploring whether a Brighton & Hove place-based trust initiated by the local authority could be available to schools that wished to join, while other schools could remain maintained by the Council.

Councillor Meadows asked a supplementary question:

Would schools entering such a trust enable the Council to close schools and release school land for housing?

Councillor Taylor replied:

No. That was unrelated to the proposal. Falling pupil numbers remained a wider strategic issue for the city, but the proposed trust was not about releasing school sites.

6. Councillor Earthey asked:

What progress had been made on mitigating serious flooding in Ovingdean, Rottingdean and Saltdean.

Reply from Councillor Muten:

He outlined continuing engineering investigations and drainage work across the affected locations, including proposed works in Ovingdean, priority drainage cleansing in Rottingdean and liaison with Southern Water on condition surveys and sewer infrastructure.

Councillor Earthey asked a supplementary question:

Would local councillors, residents and other stakeholders be consulted as the affected areas appeared to be widening?

Councillor Muten replied:

Yes. The information would be circulated and engineers would continue to engage with ward councillors and other stakeholders as the work progressed.

7. Councillor Bagaeen was not in attendance and the question was not taken.

8. Question 8 had been withdrawn.

9. Councillor Davis, on behalf of Councillor Sykes, asked:

Why had the administration interpreted 'involved companies' in the earlier divestment Notice of Motion as companies operating in illegal settlements in the West Bank, thereby limiting the scope of the motion?

Reply from Councillor Sankey:

She said the matter had been addressed through the February Cabinet report implementing the Notice of Motion. The administration had interpreted the motion as referring to companies active in the West Bank, had written to the relevant East Sussex Pension Fund bodies and had subsequently identified pension-fund exposure to companies on the relevant list. She had written to members of the Pension Committee and would continue to consider how the investment strategy could be influenced as pension arrangements changed.

Councillor Davis asked a supplementary question:

Councillor Davis indicated that the response had addressed the point he intended to raise and did not pursue a further supplementary question.

10. Councillor Lyons asked:

When would councillors receive a list showing the priority order for road repairs and the assessment used to determine that order, noting that Bramble Rise had been described as priority 511?

Reply from Councillor Muten:

He referred to the backlog of highway repairs, increased Government funding and the expansion of repair teams. He said the Council had significantly increased pothole repairs during January and February and was continuing to address the backlog.

Councillor Lyons asked a supplementary question:

Could councillors be provided with the list of roads ahead of Bramble Rise and the assessment criteria used to prioritise each road?

Councillor Muten replied:

He said the highways programme for the coming financial year had been presented to Cabinet and that roads had been assessed and scheduled. He also thanked residents for reporting defects so that repairs could be programmed.

105.2 The 30-minute period for oral questions then expired. A motion to extend the time for oral questions was moved and seconded and was put to the vote.

105.3 The motion to extend the time was lost. Questions 11 to 18 were therefore not reached.

106 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

106.1 Councillor Parrott introduced the report.

106.2 Councillors Shanks, Meadows and Earthey spoke on the matter.

106.3 Councillor Parrott responded to the debate.

106.4 RESOLVED:

1) That Council appointed Members/representatives to various bodies as listed in Appendix 1 and Addendum 3 to the report.

2) That Councillor Sam Parrott be appointed as Chair of People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3) That the Chief Executive be granted delegated authority to make any necessary in-year changes to appointments to Outside Bodies and Partnerships, following

consultation with the Leader (and any additional Member consultation considered appropriate).

4) That the Monitoring Officer be granted delegated authority to update the Constitution to reflect recommendation 2.3 above.

107 COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME REDUCTION STRATEGY 2026-2029

107.1 Councillor McGregor introduced the report.

107.2 Councillors Shanks, Lyons, Wilkinson, Hill and Hogan spoke on the matter.

107.3 Councillor McGregor responded to the debate.

107.4 RESOLVED:

1) Approves the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2026–2029, attached in Appendix 1.

2) Agrees to delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Families, Children and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Youth Services and the Community Safety Partnership, to make minor amendments required to ensure alignment with any relevant new legislation (e.g., Crime & Policing Bill) and devolution-related governance, that may come into force during the lifetime of this strategy.

108 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2026-27

108.1 Councillor Sankey introduced the report.

108.2 Councillors Hill, Meadows, Cattell and McNair spoke on the matter.

108.3 Councillor Sankey responded to the debate.

108.4 RESOLVED:

1)That Full Council adopts the pay policy statement for 2026/27 attached at Appendix 1.

109 AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON THE BRIGHTON GENERAL HOSPITAL SITE

109.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Rowkins and formally seconded by Councillor Winder.

109.2 Councillors Lademacher, Theobald, McLeay, Galvin, Meadows and Earthey spoke on the matter.

109.3 Councillor Rowkins responded to the debate.

109.4 The Mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried unanimously.

109.5 RESOLVED:

This council notes:

1) The ongoing housing crisis in the city, and the dire need for more genuinely affordable homes.

2) The lack of readily available sites for housing development to meet this need.

3) That the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust are revisiting plans to build a new Health Hub on the Brighton General Hospital site and intend to vacate much of the rest of the site.

4) That many public sector “key workers” are priced out of the city.

This council resolves to:

1) “Express support for the principle of prioritising social housing on suitable public sector land”

2) Request a report to Cabinet that assesses the viability of acquiring the site and developing social housing, either on a standalone basis, or via the Joint Venture with Hyde.

3) Request that this notice of motion is sent to the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust for information.

110 3G PITCHES - USE OF CRUMB RUBBER INFILL

110.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Earthey and formally seconded by Councillor Fishleigh.

110.2 Councillor Fowler moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Robins.

110.3 Councillors Pickett, Lyons and Davis spoke on the matter.

110.4 Councillor Earthey responded to the debate and did not accept the Labour Group amendment.

110.5 The Mayor put the Labour Group amendment to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

110.6 The Mayor put the motion as amended to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

110.7 RESOLVED:

This council notes:

1) The importance of 3G Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) for physical wellbeing and the significant gap between demand and provision in Brighton & Hove.

2) The use of Crumb Rubber Infill (CRI) in UK 3G AGPs

3) The disparity in the legal position on CRI between the UK/EU;

4) The growing concerns about the human/environmental health risks posed by CRI in AGPs;

5) Sport England's funding for 3G CRI contradicts its commitment(1) to carbon neutrality/microplastic reduction;

6) BHCC Policies SU3 (Water Resources and their Quality), Policy DM43 in the Local Plan.

7) That there are currently no proven alternative materials to CRI or alternative surfaces that provide the same or similar levels of durability.

8) The trials being undertaken by the Football Federation to test alternative infill materials.

9) The Petition to Parliament to ban the use of CRI on all new 3G artificial football pitches (2).

This council resolves to:

1) To request a report from Officers to Cabinet outlining:

   a. the health and environmental risks of CRI as, for example, expressed by the UK EA, DEFRA, EU ECHA, and some academic institutions;

   b.the current guidance/policies of relevant bodies such as the UK Government, Sports England, this Council, and other relevant bodies allowing the construction of new 3G pitches using CRI;

   c. the alternative materials to CRI that could be used in future 3G pitches in the City;

   d. the legal and practical options open to BHCC for the use of CRI in Council-owned/supported 3G pitches.

   e. the extent to which planning policy can be used to influence the materials being used in future non-Council-owned 3G pitches

2)To support calls for the alignment UK law with EU law on intentionally added microplastics, including the use of CRI in 3G AGPs.

Footnotes

1. Sport England "Every Move" (2024) strategy

2. https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/752679

111 FOODBANK FREE CITY - FROM PARCELS TO COMMUNITY SUPPORT HUBS

111.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor De Oliveira and formally seconded by Councillor Hill.

111.2 At the four-hour point of the meeting, the Mayor moved a motion under Council Procedure Rule 15 to terminate the meeting subject to voting on the remaining business. The motion was not carried and the meeting continued.

111.3 Councillor Alexander moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor McGregor.

111.4 Councillors Hogan and Fishleigh spoke on the matter.

111.5 Councillor De Oliveira responded to the debate and did not accept the Labour Group amendment.

111.6 The Mayor put the Labour Group amendment to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

111.7 The Mayor put the motion as amended to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

111.8 RESOLVED:

This council notes:

1) Reliance on food banks is driven by low incomes, high living costs.

2) Emergency food parcels cannot be a permanent substitute for food and financial security.

3) The city's community food organisations have the trust and reach in providing dignified, non-stigmatising support.

4) Food is a matter of dignity and social rights, not charity or "deservingness".

5) Organisations committed to end food poverty such as the Child Poverty Action Group state that links between advice services and food banks should be increased.

This council resolves to:

1) Support the principle of achieving the goal of a Foodbank-Free Brighton & Hove, by reducing poverty and strengthening preventative support.

2) Request officers continue to take a preventative and long-term approach in tackling food poverty and continue to work with community food organisations to support the aim within the Brighton & Hove Food Strategy Action Plan '25–'30 to help foodbanks, when appropriate, move into affordable food hubs that combine dignified food access with advice on, benefits, housing, debt, health and employment support.

3) Request officers to continue to work with residents on building financial resilience, giving advice and signposting to community food organisations when appropriate.

4) Request members take note of the Crisis & Resilience Fund report which sets out how the council is working to increase resilience for residents in poverty, working with community food organisations and the Community & Voluntary Sector to ensure those in food crisis receive immediate support alongside advice to prevent future crisis.

112 POST-BUDGET CHANGES TO THE TOILET TAX

112.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor McNair and formally seconded by Councillor Meadows.

112.2 Councillors Hill, Thomson, Shanks, Sheard and Meadows spoke on the matter.

112.3 Councillor McNair responded to the debate.

112.4 The Mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been lost.

113 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting concluded at 9:45PM.

Signed Chair

Dated this day of 2026

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

2.00pm 23 JULY 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Fowler (Chair), Asaduzzaman, Atkinson, Alexander, Allen, Bagaeen, Baghoth, Cattell, Czolak, Daniel, Davis, Earthey, Fishleigh, Goddard, Goldsmith, Grimshaw, Guilmant, Helliwell, Hewitt, Hill, Hogan, Lademacher, Loughran, Lyons, Mackey, McGregor, McNair, Meadows, Miller, Muten, Nann, Oliveira, Parrott, Pickett, Robinson, Rowkins, Sankey, Shanks, Sheard, Simon, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, Thomson, West, Wilkinson, Winder, Williams and Barton Ahmad

PART ONE

*

The mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that she intended to invite the Green Group Leader to introduce the newly elected councillor for their Group, who would then come forward so that she could receive them and invite them to take their seat in the Council Chamber.

Councillor Davis introduced: Councillor Nadia Barton Ahmad Goldsmid

The mayor welcomed the newly elected Member to the Council and wished them well in their terms of office.

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

12.1 Councillor Wilkinson declared an interest in relation to the Deputation concerning Wellington House.

12.2 No other declarations of interests in matters appearing on the agenda were made.

13 MINUTES

13.1 The minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on the 21 May 2026 were approved and signed by the mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

14 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

14.1 The Mayor provided the following communications:

Good afternoon, Councillors, colleagues, and residents. It is a pleasure to be with you all today at my first Full Council meeting. Before I begin, I would like to thank everyone who has made me feel so welcome since taking on this role. To say the last two months have been a whirlwind would be an understatement.

It has been an incredibly busy and enjoyable start to my mayoral year, filled with community visits, official engagements, celebrations, and opportunities to meet the remarkable people who make our city so special. One of my first engagements as mayor was attending the Women's FA Cup final at Wembley where I was proud to support Brighton and Hove Albion and represent our city on the national stage. It was a privilege to be there and demonstrate that the whole city stands behind our teams and celebrates their achievements.

I was also honoured to unveil the commemorative blue plaque at the Seven Stars Pub, marking Albion's 125th anniversary and recognising the location where the club was founded.

Alongside my civic duties, we have begun planning activities to support my chosen mayoral charities, Forward Facing and Whoopsadaisy. I am delighted to announce that our first fundraising event will take place in mid-September at Hove and Kingsway Bowling Club, featuring an evening of music and entertainment. Details are available on the Mayor's social media channels and I hope many of you will be able to join us.

We also have a number of exciting events planned throughout the year, including a garden party and a charity walk. Over recent weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet many charities, volunteers, and community organisations, including at the Brighton and Hove Soiree Rotary Club Family Community Day in Hove Park and the Charity Day held in the Royal Pavilion Gardens. Both events provided a wonderful introduction to the breadth of community activities taking place across our city. I've also been delighted to welcome a number of guests to the Mayor's Parlour, including volunteers from BHT Sussex and a local vet campaigner and author, Mark Abraham OBE, whose first children's book, Leon's Reef, has recently been published. I later joined Mark and representatives from the Sussex Wildlife Trust to visit the Secrets Beneath the Sea exhibition on the seafront, where children and families enjoyed a reading of the book, followed by a community beach clean.

It was a particular honour to host this year's Battle of Boar's Head commemoration, and to include within the service the rededication of the Brighton War Memorial following the completion of the Valley Gardens restoration works. The improvements to the memorial area, including the resetting of the memorial stones, new paving, and pedestrianisation, have created a more accessible and reflective space where residents can honour those who gave their lives in service. I would like to thank the Archdeacon of Brighton and Lewes and my Chaplain, Father Tom Holbird, for leading this important service. I was also delighted to attend Armed Forces Day at the Take Shelter air raid shelter at Downs Junior School. The day included a tour of this remarkable site, opportunities to meet veterans and cadets, and participation in the drumhead service. As part of the city's Armed Forces Day celebrations, we were also part of the Patcham Silver Band at Brighton Bandstand. Where residents enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of traditional marching tunes and modern favourites.

Earlier this month, the Civic Office team and I attended St Matthias Church in Fiveways, where Father Tom serves as Vicar. As a member of the congregation, it was particularly special to introduce myself formally as Mayor, speak about my role both as Mayor and Ward Councillor, and reflect on the important contribution Father Tom will make to our civic life as Mayor's Chaplain. We were all made to feel incredibly welcome.

The diversity of events I've attended demonstrates the incredible vibrancy of our city, from opening the new paddle courts at Withdean, and visiting the University of Sussex New Health and Wellbeing Centre, to attending the Woodingdean Carnival, leading the citizens' ceremonies, meeting the Hangleton Women's Multicultural Group, and joining celebrations at Brighton Bear Weekend. Every engagement has reinforced the strength and richness of our communities.

I've also been privileged to attend a number of events celebrating and supporting our LGBTQIA+ communities. These are included in the launch of the latest edition of Scene Magazine during Pride Month, as well as the summer concerts of both the Actually Gay Men's Chorus and the Rainbow Chorus. These performances were joyful, moving, and a wonderful example of the creativity and inclusivity that Brighton and Hove is known for. Most recently, I had the pleasure of attending Trans Pride, where I met organisers, volunteers, charities, and community groups who work tirelessly to support our trans and non-binary communities. It was a fantastic day of celebration, visibility, and solidarity and I am extremely grateful for the warm welcome I received. I am very much looking forward to joining the city's Pride celebrations next month and seeing Brighton and Hove at its very best.

As Mayor, it has been a privilege to represent our city over these past two months. Everywhere I go, I am reminded of the kindness, commitment, and community spirit that defines Brighton and Hove. Finally, as we approach the summer break, I hope that everyone is able to take some well-deserved time to rest and recharge and to enjoy spending time with family and friends. Thank you.

15 LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

15.1 The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder’s gave the following communications.

Thank you very much, Madam Mayor, and I do want to take this opportunity, Madam Mayor and my fellow Councillors, since we last met Brighton and Hove has continued to strengthen its position regionally and nationally. We've launched the Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority, unlocking £1.4 billion over 30 years, bringing to life our Labour Group's vision for our city and our wider region. I'm honoured to have been elected as its first chair and next week, at our third formal meeting, it is proposed that I will be the Lead Member for Housing and Spatial Development, while my colleague, Councillor Taylor, will be the Lead Member for Finance and Investment. This is a game changer for our city and region. And today, I'm really pleased that we at this Full Council meeting will be making appointments to the audit and scrutiny committees of that new authority. And in this week in which the former Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, has become our Prime Minister, and you can clap that Labour colleagues, made a passionate case for devolution being at the centre of our party's vision for social justice. I'm proud that through the leadership of this group on this issue, Brighton and Hove is now perfectly positioned to reap the rewards of greater devolution.

The new Number 10 North Office is going to provide leadership on local and regional growth, and with more funding and powers coming our way, we will now be able to start making the investment decisions to grow our local economy, create good jobs, end the crisis in youth unemployment, build more affordable homes, and sort out our transport connectivity. And we are already moving at pace, Madam Mayor. I'm pleased to announce today that our bid for funds to undertake a feasibility study put on bus franchising has been successful. The government is passporting even more money than

we asked for, over half a million pounds, to our new strategic authority to look at proposals for bus franchising across Sussex and Brighton.
It has been a good week for buses, Madam Mayor, and everybody that uses them. The £2 bus cap announcement by our new Labour Government is excellent news for this city, where so many of us take the bus to get to work, to school, to college, health appointments, or to see family and friends. We have been working hard to keep bus fares as low as we can within our existing enhanced partnership system, recently launching a £1 bus fare for residents in Whitehawk, and from this September offering free bus travel for our care leavers between 18 and 25. But this additional pledge from government, which will start in January next year, is hugely, hugely welcome. It's going to make a huge difference to residents in this city.
Our new government has also today promised to slash business rates for our hospitality sector by 20% and I am lobbying the government to include mixed venues, such as Revenge, in the city which offer live music along with club nights and other entertainment to be included in the current and future criteria for this relief.
This announcement is so critical to our city, Madam Mayor, where 24,000 people are employed in the hospitality sector. Today's announcement is also hot on the heels of the government's move to scrap VAT on electricity bills, which was made on Tuesday this week, representing an over £5 million investment and savings to households in this city, and it's this kind of policymaking that will also support our transition to clean energy. We also welcome the decision to scrap digital ID, which was never in our manifesto.
Like our government, Madam Mayor, we are relentlessly focused on tackling the cost of living, which is why last month, building on a previous Labour Group notice of motion, we have provided new pilot funding to Pelican Parcels for their vital work in providing critical supplies to families with newborn babies. We continue to escalate our Council Home Buyback programme, as well as building new council and affordable homes right across the city, from Moulsecoomb, to Sackville Road, to Portslade.
Our Labour Government's Renters' Rights Act is now in force, preventing no-fault evictions, preventing disproportionate rent increases, and bidding wars. This is the biggest step to change in tenant rights in a generation and nowhere, nowhere is it more needed than in this city where around a third of our residents rent.
And our Labour Group's landlord Licencing scheme has generated positive results in the wards where it currently exists, Kemptown, Moulsecoomb and Bevendean, Queen's Park, Whitehawk and Marina, which is why from October this year we will be rolling out landlord licencing in Central Hove and in Regency bringing even more much needed support to renters to demand adequate standards in their homes. Where other groups in this chamber prevaricated Madam Mayor and delayed, we took action and we have got results for working people.
And in a further big generational like change, we have successfully persuaded our government that, as well as getting better, Brighton and Hove should get bigger as well. In one of the biggest changes to our boundary in living memory, the government has decided that our boundary should merge with East Saltdean, Telscombe, and Peacehaven. I am delighted with this decision, which supports our evidence on how in reality people in those communities travel in and out of the city for work, for leisure, to attend school, college, healthcare appointments, see family and friends, and so on. The Centre for Cities has said that we are one of the most underbounded cities in the country and our Labour group has been clear that we need to put this right to unlock growth, good jobs, better living standards, and transport connectivity.
I'll be reassuring residents in the areas that we are due to merge with that we will always respect their unique identities, just as we do already with communities that are already

part of our city from Rottingdean to Portslade. In order to give effect to this change, we'll be establishing a shadow authority for the new footprint with elections taking place next May. Current councillor terms will be extended for a year to facilitate this transition and the new authority will go live on the 1st April 2028.

Madam Mayor, we have also been working hard to ensure that this is always a city that we can be proud of here in Brighton and Hove, with a new world-leading seafront prospectus that was published just a few months ago, we've been restoring our heritage lanterns, rolling out deep cleans, making over a million pounds further investment into our waste and recycling services. And we've also continued our work to be a more inclusive city. We launched our new civic leadership programme in conjunction with Operation Black Vote, creating new pathways into civic leadership in roles such as magistracy, school governorships for underrepresented communities. There are over 30 places available at no cost to successful applicants and I would encourage anybody who is curious to apply.

We've brought forward a new SEND Sufficiency Plan, helping expand local support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and we were proud to receive renewed Council of Sanctuary status, recognising our commitment to welcoming and supporting people seeking safety and refuge. Last weekend we hosted Trans Pride, the largest Trans Pride protest in Europe, and we have rededicated our Boar's Head Memorial in a moving ceremony to mark the 110th anniversary of the day that Sussex died. There has been so much positive feedback on the new look memorial as part of Valley Gardens 3 and the centrepiece, pedestrian access, and views of the Pavilion that we have created.

Madam Mayor, since we last met, our city saw off far right agitators that came from outside of this city to stir up division. We worked hard with our One Voice partnership to support minority communities in advance of this planned march, and I made sure that our city's anti-racist values were communicated clearly. Following the announcement of another planned march, originally set for the 8th August, I wrote to Sussex Police to stress the impact of racist campaigning, and I am pleased that the organisers have now withdrawn.

Madam Mayor, we've been putting our values into action, whether it is our new Unpaid Carers Strategy, whether it's launching our inequality review, whether it's the progress we've made on pay equity for staff here at the council. And Madam Mayor, since we last met, we have also experienced stark heatwaves that remind us of the importance of our work on decarbonisation and climate adaptation. I will be pushing for the Sussex energy work that we established when we chaired the Greater Brighton Economic Board to be made part of our new strategic authority. We've taken a major leap forward in the last few months with our work on solar across Sussex and our goal is to reach energy independence in our county by 2040.

Turning to today's agenda, I'm pleased to see the Coldean Neighbourhood Plan, which I know has come about after a huge amount of work from the local community in Coldean, the appointment of two new independent persons under the Localism Act, the review of political balance following the recent Goldsmith by-election, and the appointments, as I mentioned, that we are making to the strategic authority, for their Audit and Governance Committee and their Overview and Scrutiny Committee. I'm also pleased to see the review of the Council's Constitution, making good on our pledge to be a responsive council and reducing the deadline for public questions from eight working days to four. This will allow residents to submit questions after the agenda has been published and it will strengthen democracy in our city, public participation, and council decision-making. Finally, in our Youth Justice Action Plan, I'm pleased to see

this coming forward, building on our work to reduce first time entrance to the youth justice system. Thank you, Madam Mayor. I will finish there.

16 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS.

16.1 The mayor stated that she had been notified of five ordinary petitions to be presented today. She advised that petitioners had up to three minutes to outline the petition and to confirm the number of signatories and that the petition would then be responded to by the relevant Cabinet Member.

16.2 The lead petitioners for the following petitions were not in attendance: Complimentary Visitor Parking Permits for Residents in Controlled Parking Zones; Madeira Drive Parking Charges; and Keep East Brighton Seafront Accessible for All. The Mayor therefore proceeded to the petitions where the lead petitioners were present.

16.3 Justin Newland on behalf of Katie Turner presented a petition concerning North Hollingdean Residents' Parking Scheme.

16.4 Councillor Muten replied:

Thank you, Madam Mayor, and thank you, Justin, for your petition. North Hollingdean residents have been consulted on the introduction of a controlled parking zone, or CPZ, on two previous occasions. As part of these consultations, residents were advised that if a parking scheme was introduced in South Hollingdean without a corresponding scheme in North Hollingdean, there was a possibility that parking demand and vehicle displacement could increase in the surrounding streets. Despite this, the majority of respondents in the North Hollingdean on both occasions indicated that they did not wish to see any changes to the existing parking arrangements. This was very clear and the council respected that view.

However, following the implementation of the South Hollingdean CPZ, a significant number of residents in North Hollingdean have expressed renewed concerns about parking pressures in their area. We have received this petition supported by more than 300 plus residents requesting a further consultation on parking controls. Whilst it's not normally the council's practise to consult the same areas three times within a relatively short period, we recognise the strength of feeling demonstrated through this petition and changing circumstances experienced by residents since the introduction of neighbouring CPZ.

In light of this level of engagement, we believe it is appropriate to give residents another opportunity to have their views heard. I can therefore confirm that a further consultation for North Hollingdean will be undertaken later this summer. This consultation will enable all residents and businesses within the area to consider the current situation and provide their views on whether parking controls should be introduced.

As with previous consultations, any further decision will be informed by the results of the consultation, ensuring that the views of the local community remain at the heart of the process. This council remains committed to listening to residents and responding to where there is a clear evidence that circumstances have changed or there is significant community interest in revisiting a previous decision. I do not anticipate any further

consultation concerning this matter beyond this, and the outcome from this third consultation will be final.

16.5 John Amos presented a petition concerning Green Ara Adjacent to Woodingdean Lawn Memorial.

16.6 Councillor Rowkins replied:

I know this location pretty well, and I agree it is certainly more than just a patch of grass. The views are amazing, and of course, as you say, the poignance of its location near the cemetery can't be ignored. I think where we perhaps don't quite agree is that the peaceful enjoyment of residents and the management of the site to support nature are mutually exclusive. And I do want to stress the word “management” of the site.

So, I think sometimes it's easy to think that a site that's being looked after for nature is just left to it and that's not what is being proposed here and I'll talk a bit more about that in a minute. So, the site is large enough to ensure that parts of it can be retained for the kinds of public enjoyment you describe. I do just want to pick up and acknowledge your points, though, on how such sites have been managed in the past and elsewhere and hopefully provide some reassurance.

First, the wild short grasslands of the South Downs are, in my view, at their best when they are grazed. When I say at their best, I mean both in terms of biodiversity and in aesthetic terms. So, when these grasslands are grazed, two things happen and the first is that growth is kept under control and the second is that only limited nutrients are put back into the soil, unlike when grass is mown and left to decompose, which is what happens in many locations at the moment. So, the combination of those two things means that no species becomes dominant enough to grow to a significant and height, obstructing views and creating the sort of impression that it's not managed, and also allowing a wide range of species to become established.

The good news is that we've recently secured funding for a trapped and mounted cut and collect mower, which will enable us to maintain these sites in a much better way. In effect, replicating the grazing that was seen on the wider landscape. Now, I note the public engagement conducted by ward councillors and the Woodingdean Wilderness Group in 2025 and the very strong support demonstrated to that project. Obviously, I take the point that that's one group of people responded to that and there's others who responded to other things.
I suppose just to say that the support demonstrated in that engagement, I think is no doubt underpinned by the grave concern that many of us have regarding the collapse of the natural world and the clear need to reverse this decline. And that's obviously something that the local nature recovery strategy across Sussex seeks to reverse. But also the desire, I think, to bring nature closer to our communities. You describe in your petition this as being a place for ongoing serenity and community gathering. I believe that this will not only still be the case, but possibly even more so with a greater and closer presence of the nature for which the Sussex landscape is so well known. Thank you.

17 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. **Mark Cull asked:**

The Government says it exists to make the country fairer, reduce poverty and help improve lives, and that it is committed to cutting the cost of living to people and families. We all know that sport promotes positive mental and physical health, reduces isolation and improves social health. Brighton & Hove City Council has contracted Game4Padel to operate padel in our city. Game4Padel is a private company with many wealthy shareholders, who, by the way, do not reside in our city. To play padel at Hove Park a court can cost up to £32, and at Withdean, up to £48. Compare this to hiring a tennis court for £9. These prices are unaffordable for a great many people in our city, so how does this contract align to the Administrations commitments to making the country fairer, improving lives and reducing the cost of living?

Response from Councillor Hewitt on behalf of Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries:

I'm responding on behalf of Councillor Robins, who is the portfolio holder. We agree that access to sport and physical activity should not be determined by someone's income. Sport plays a vital role in improving physical and mental health, reducing isolation and bringing communities together. And as a Labour administration, we want as many residents as possible to benefit from those opportunities. Game4Paddle has been awarded 2 separate contracts to provide Paddle facilities in the city through separate tendering processes, with only the Hove Beach Park contract awarded directly by Brighton and Hove City Council. They were successful in part because they offered good value alongside significant investment in new facilities and a commitment to growing participation in the sport.
The prices you referred to are at the upper end of the pricing structure. Courts can be booked from £5.25 per person at Hove Beach Park with membership. The higher prices that we've seen reflect very considerable investment made by the operator in the planning, design, and construction of the covered canopy, which enables year-round play and could be booked from £8.25. Since opening up Withdean, Game4Paddle has provided free taster sessions for local schools and has been working alongside our public health colleagues to explore ways of reducing financial barriers to participation. We welcome that approach and will continue to encourage in these initiatives such as school engagement, community sessions, and other opportunities that broaden access to the sport. While the tennis courts at Withdean remain generally cheaper than paddle courts, participation is our key measure of success. Despite there being twice as many tennis courts, more people have played paddle than tennis since April, reflecting the sport's growing popularity. We share your ambition of making sport more affordable and accessible. Where the council works with private operators, our expectation is that they not only provide high quality facilities, but also deliver meaningful social value for our residents. We will continue to work with Game4Paddle, as we do with all our leisure partners, to encourage affordable pricing where possible, expand opportunities for local communities, and ensure that investment in public leisure facilities to help create a healthier, fairer, and more active city for everyone. This Labour Administration is proud of the action we've taken since May 2023 to make sport and leisure more accessible, inclusive, and welcoming for everyone.
Mark Cull asked a supplementary question:
So I'm working on the assumption that when the contract was issued that the Council did its due diligence and that there was an equality impact assessment. So, I'm wondering through those processes, how many people in the city you determined would be financially excluded from playing paddle under the contract you agreed?
Councillor Hewitt replied:

I'll liaise with Councillor Robins and officers and we'll provide a written response to your supplementary question. Thank you.

2. **Mike Sexton asked:**

The grit bin is near the bottom of the Bazehill. This is not ideal as the main hazard is 100m further up the hill where the road bends. This area always get slippery when icy, vehicles brake and pedestrians cross here. The department responsible states "current location offers the most balanced distribution of properties along BazeHill," which is untrue as if the bin was sited at the bend there would be approx 25 household level and above the bin and 18 below it. Please move the bin near the bend so we do not have to carry the grit uphill.

Response from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

We will be reviewing the winter service plan in the coming months and this will include a review of grit bins and will take into account your suggestion as part of this review process. Your input is really useful to help us find the very best locations so that the bins can be effective as possible. Winter grit bins are placed in communities for local residents to use when most needed and feedback from residents as where best to place really does make our winter service provision better. So thank you for your proposal. We will certainly take that into consideration and very much welcome the feedback from yourselves and local communities across the city. Thank you.

Mike Sexton asked a supplementary question:

Hopefully someone will tell me what the decision will be and I hope you do move it. It's a simple move and could be cost free because I'm perfectly happy to move the bin myself.

Councillor Muten replied:

Thank you for your kind offer. I would suggest, for probably health and safety reasons, that we did that for you, because if it's full of grit, it would be very heavy. But we certainly recognise your enthusiasm and seriousness about this, and we will review this and come back to you with a clear answer of where we can best put it.

3. **Councillor Fishleigh on behalf of John Parsons asked:**

I live in Ovingdean next to a plot of BHCC-owned landed which has recently been identified for disposal. The boundary between this plot and my property is the wall of our home. We need maintenance access here for roof and double height windows requiring scaffolding. Current drawings indicate a planned child play area looking into our bedrooms! I am generally pro development but these plans will surely create problems for everybody. Would BHCC consider an offer to buy approximately 270 sqm prior to the entire plot going on the open market? I can offer £38,000.

Response from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration:

Always like responding to questions on Ovingdean as the only native Ovingdeaner in the chamber. I'd also love to just say deal and get the cash here and now, but the more proper answer is officers will absolutely consider it via agents, reasonable proposal, they're looking at it already and aware of it.

More broadly, I'm glad that John noted in his question that he's pro-housing development, as are we, but obviously housing development has to make sense in the local area, has to make sense with adjoining properties. So we'll look at it and respond to John. Thank you.

4. **Daniel Rue asked:**

This council set out its Accessible city strategy back in 2023. A specific focus of the strategy was to work closely with the disabled community in Brighton, specifically through the Disability Panel. Does the council believe the current approach is living up to standards and

commitments set out in the original strategy and does it believe all relevant voices in the city are being heard as we enter the final few years of the plan?

Response from Councillor Alexander, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care:

Thank you, Mr. Rue, for coming with your question today. I can assure you that this Labour administration takes accessibility for our disabled residents really seriously. In fact, when we took over the administration in May 23, one of the very first things we did was to reinstate a disabled parking bay in Gardner Street in the North Laine, which the previous administration had taken away, which had left a disabled resident unable to leave her home.

So, the Accessible City Strategy is founded on the principle of nothing about us without us, placing disabled people at the heart of its delivery. The Council remains committed to ensuring that deaf, disabled and neurodiverse residents play a central part in shaping, monitoring and reviewing the strategy.

In response to feedback and following consultation with members of the Disability Panel and the wider reference group, the Council introduced a single accessible city strategy advisory group, which brings together strategic insight, lived experience and community expertise. The advisory group is
independently chaired by community organisations and it is designed to ensure ongoing involvement, challenge and scrutiny. Its terms of reference specifically recognise and promote the voices of deaf people, people with sensory impairments, neurodivergent people, people with mental health conditions, people with learning disabilities, and those living with long-term health conditions. They also include a commitment to regularly review the group structure to ensure no community is left out. This approach reflects the original commitments of the strategy and provides a strong platform for inclusive engagement. We remain committed to acting on feedback, explaining decisions and continually reviewing arrangements to ensure that a broad range of disabled voices are presented, heard and valued.

Daniel Rue asked a supplementary question:

I appreciate your comments and I know your comment about Gardner Street.
The basis of my question was actually after speaking with a friend and neighbour in the North Laine area who has a similar situation right now where they struggle to get out of their homes because of the parking. So perhaps that's something we could connect with after to talk about and see how we can support them?

Councillor Alexander replied:

Yes, please do get in contact with me and we'll look into the issue because I haven't been aware of this before now, so thank you.

5. **Laura King asked:**

Under BHCC Interim Chief Financial Officer, John Hooton, the cost for the King Alfred redevelopment project rose sharply from £47m to £65m in September 2025. Now a new permanent CFO 151 Officer - Elizabeth Griffiths - has been appointed, is Ms Griffiths instigating an urgent and independent review of budget and costs for this project?

Response from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration:

Thank you Laura for your important question. So, all projects are subject to business cases and in particular very large projects like this one. They're also subject to business case reviews, which is really important because obviously things change in the overall construction environment, the borrowing environment, etc. And this one is no different and I can confirm that the business case is currently being reviewed.

Laura King asked a supplementary question:

Given that the proposed King Alfred Sports Hub would be built on Council-owned land, yet it is estimated to cost £65 million, around three times the cost of the comparable New Alliance Leisure facility, despite being identified by the Council as a high-risk project, and with the final price acknowledged as potentially higher, how can the Council demonstrate that borrowing the necessary funds represents best value for public benefit is it affordable to repay and will not become another financial disaster even larger than the i360?

Councillor Taylor replied:

Well look, I think the first thing to say is building big projects, building big infrastructure costs money and we acknowledge that and it is a large amount of money, of course it is. When we compare it to the i360, I think it's a very interesting comparison because on this side of the chamber, we take very seriously our responsibilities on public money and when we're investing it.
And the things that we're thinking about investing money in is big housing schemes to tackle the housing crisis and leisure facilities that the public want and need, not big towers in the sky that go nowhere. So, we're pretty happy with the overall approach. That said, as I said, we have to keep looking at the business case as it develops. Overall, my sense is that the city want a top class leisure facility, that's what we want and that's what we're getting on with.

6. **Chris Davis asked:**

The Council recently published its Circular Economy Action Plan for 2026 2035. This Plan lists 'Brighton AI', a network encouraging the adoption of AI technologies across the City, as a 'delivery partner' within the Plan. Given what is widely known about the range of environmental impacts from the development and use of AI - including with regards to energy and water demands, and reliance on extractive industries throughout supply chains - this proposed partnership would severely compromise the credibility of the Council's circular economy ambitions, and broader Net Zero strategy. Can the council please explain the decision to include Brighton AI within this Plan - including supplying any evidence as to how Brighton AI will 'advance circular economy practices' - and clarify whether any consideration was given to environmental impacts when including the group within the Plan.

Response from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero and Environment Services:

The Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan recognises that innovation will be essential to accelerating the transition to a more circular, sustainable and resilient economy. And for this

reason, it identifies a broad range of partners and sectors that can contribute knowledge, expertise and innovation, including
businesses, universities, community organisations, and yes, the city's digital and technology sector.

The route map specifically highlights the importance of strengthening innovation partnerships and engaging with Brighton and Hove's growing digital and tech economy to support the development of new circular business models, improve resource efficiency, and reduce waste.

The inclusion of organisations from the digital and tech sectors reflects this wider objective. It does not represent an endorsement of any particular technology, and nor does it alter the route map's core purpose, which is to keep materials in use for longer, reduce reliance on virgin resources, and support the city's Net Zero ambitions, particularly around scope 3, incidentally, which is so often ignored.

Environmental sustainability remains at the heart of this route map and the plan is focused on reducing waste, tackling scope 3 emissions, supporting resource efficiency, promoting economic activity that contributes to a more regenerative economy. We will continue to work with a wide range of partners where they can support the delivery of our circular economy and Net Zero objectives.

Chris Davis asked a supplementary question:

I wondered if you could maybe speak to the process for selecting Brighton AI specifically for inclusion in this plan? Was there a kind of open process for interested organisations working within tech and innovation to come forward? Were there existing relationships in place?

I appreciate some of this may not be for sort of public discussion, but if you're able to speak to kind of how you arrived at a decision, I guess, to include them within the plan, that would be great.

Councillor Rowkins replied:

The process of identifying sort of partners in the delivery of the route map and action plan was really a sort of very broad one, a very broad approach of like, who have we got in the city who we think can make a contribution to this agenda? It's not an exhaustive list. I'm sure more partners will become obvious as time goes by, nor is it baked in stone. So, you know, it's intended to be,
you know, it's a very clear action plan in terms of it has very tangible sort of delivery and sort of measurable objectives as part of it, but it's not set in stone, if that makes sense.

It will be something that we continue to work on over the coming years. But I'm happy to pick up any concerns that you've got specifically and certainly to take on any suggestions that you or anyone else has in terms of other partner organisations that might help us with this agenda.

7. **Tony Greenstein asked:**

Parent carers are unanimously opposed to closing Wellington House. However it is spun there is a lack of evidence for safe alternatives and a failure to model future demand. It is also abundantly clear that the alternatives on offer do not have the capacity to admit more clients.'

This proposal is driven by financial considerations. The Council's alternative providers are more of a hope and a prayer. Voluntary/private sector organisations are notorious for folding. It is essential that the Council has at least one drop-in-centre. When the Belgrave Centre was closed a decade ago we were promised that Wellington House would be a permanent alternative. That promise is in danger of being broken. In the event of a failure of the alternative providers the Council will be left with no fall-back position. Will the Cabinet agree to abide by the views of parent carers in the consultation?

Response from Councillor Alexander, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care:

Can I start by saying that, yes, there has been the closure of some council-run services for adults with learning disabilities over the years, but none of the independent organisations that run day opportunities for adults with learning disabilities have closed down.

So, before I answer your specific question, I want to begin by recognising the emotions attached to the proposals for all those who are connected to Wellington House, especially those who attend and their parents, families and carers. I fully understand that the proposal has caused some anxiety and uncertainty, particularly for families who value the relationships, routines, and support that have developed over the years.

No final decision has yet been made on the future of Wellington House. For 12 weeks the Council has carried out a consultation with people who use the service, their families and carers, staff, advocacy organisations, the Parent and Carers Council, the Learning Disability Partnership Board, and day opportunity providers. The purpose of that consultation is to ensure that Cabinet
has a clear understanding of the views, concerns, risks, alternative proposals, and equality impacts before any decision is taken.

We have heard the concerns raised about the capacity, suitability and sustainability of alternative provision. These concerns will be reflected in the report to Cabinet. There are currently a number of other providers operating in the city, and following a recent commissioning exercise, we will also see some new providers operating in our city in the very near future. If a closure is
agreed, then Cabinet will expect that transition to alternative providers would be planned on the needs and preferences of the individual based on updated assessments of their needs and that those needs are safely and effectively met through the appropriate provision for each individual. This includes considering
continuation of care, relationships, transport, personal care, accessibility, specialist support, and the importance of respite for family carers.

So, in answer to your specific question, I know that the views of parent carers, where their adult children live at home, are that they would prefer for Wellington House to stay open. These views will not be the sole information that forms the decision by Cabinet. Cabinet will consider all the evidence before it. The views of parent carers, the people who use the service, staff advocates, providers, officers' advice, equality impacts, financial information, and any alternative proposals that were submitted through the consultation. The views of parent carers are extremely important and will be given proper weight and Cabinet will make its decision based on the full range of evidence.

Tony Greenstein asked a supplementary question:

I asked a very simple question, whether you would abide by the views of those who are most aware and most expert in the needs of adults with learning disabilities. I take it that the answer is no. You said that no voluntary providers have closed. Sussex Autistic Centre was one which did close in the recent past, so that is simply wrong. You said in the Argus on the 2nd March, “it's not just about making a saving, it's an opportunity to assess what provision people with learning disabilities and their families would like to see offered.” That's like saying that the best way to make peace is to go to war. It's Orwellian in what you are saying. The fact is that your saving will be a loss.

Well, my question is, in the document Section 5, Market Costs and Benchmarking in December 25, you said that just two out of the six providers have the skills and experience to meet the needs of the nine people with complex needs. These are ambito and aspirations. Isn't it the case that when we see a failure to meet the needs of these people, there will be absolutely nothing that the Council can do about it?

Councillor Alexander replied:

So, what you read was written in December 25, part of the consultation is about talking to the other providers and asking the providers what they need to do in order to expand because provision won't expand unless there's a reason to do so.

So, this has all been part of the consultation which will all be covered in the report that's being currently written. So, at the time of writing in December, then there were places only available at the two of the providers, but things have changed since then. And as I say, part of the consultation was talking to providers and also during the recent commissioning process, we've also attracted new providers to the city and that will all be included in the report. So, and as I said before, we would not make the decision to close Wellington House,
unless there is provision available for every single one of the 21 attendees that currently attend Wellington House.

8. **Kate Sawyer asked:**

The Council's Local SEND Reform Plan places strong emphasis on earlier identification, expert support and improving outcomes for children with SEND. Given the widely recognised lessons arising from the failures of the Tavistock Gender Identity Development Service, particularly regarding the vulnerability of autistic children experiencing gender-related distress, can the Council explain how those lessons have informed the development of its SEND Reform Plan, including workforce training and the 'Experts at Hand' model?

Response from Councillor Daniel, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Youth Services:

I would just point out that the Cass review was a review of specific health services and health interventions, which were designed specifically around trans and non-binary children and whilst that did include consideration of the needs of autistic young people in relation to the assessment and support they needed in that context, it's not directly relevant to the delivery of SEN support in education more broadly. Having said that, clearly a lack of access to that any health services or inaccessible health services will impact a child's education, whether that's

around adequate mental health support that's accessible and tailored to the needs of neurodivergent children.

Dentistry is a huge challenge for many neurodivergent children, and that again can impact on attendance and ability to focus in education, and where relevant, of course, gender identity support as well. We will always raise those challenges and any barriers that we observe that are impacting anyone's education, but particularly SEND education, with health partners.

Another theme that we considered in the strategy, which does have some overlap with that report, is the consideration of the experiences of autistic girls in particular, who have seen their access needs and access to services overlooked historically due to their presentation. And we still as a society, but also as a Council and councils around the country, I would say, all sorts of public services are catching up on that understanding of the female autistic experience. As the parent of an autistic daughter, I do not believe I'm guilty of overlooking or missing the presentation of autism in girls. And I'm pleased that I believe that our schools, including the high provision, very much understand that gendered presentation and the needs, including the fact that some of the leaders in those environments are indeed women who are neurodivergent themselves. So I think that should give you some confidence there.

More specifically, under our SEND reform plan, we are employing specialist teachers of autism and widened neurodivergence to support our education settings all the way from birth, so in nursery settings, throughout to ensure that our education is fully accessible to neurodivergent children. And those teachers are part of the Experts at Hand programme. So that's where there's a connection to that. We expect our schools to take a holistic approach to children and whether they have a SEND need or not, to work as appropriate to ensure that young people who are trans or think they may be trans are able to access their full education safely and happily, as we would expect for all children and for specific accommodations to be considered on a case by case basis, balancing a number of considerations.

Kate Sawyer asked a supplementary question:

Many of the children affected by the WellBN failures were autistic or otherwise vulnerable. The SEND reform plan places great emphasis on partnership with families and earlier identification. What has changed within the Council to ensure that when parents raise safeguarding concerns about vulnerable children, those concerns are treated with professional curiosity and potential evidence requiring exploration rather than being before they have been properly examined?

Councillor Daniel replied:

Council did not run the WellBN service, nor do I see that as in any way relevant to our SEND reform plan, which is what this question is about. However, I am confident in our safeguarding governance, complaints procedures and the external validation of our procedures. And so, I hope that answers the question, even though it wasn't connected to the SEND Reform Plan.

9. **Sarah Fitzgerald asked:**

Hollingdean currently has a single bus route, the number 20 which recently replaced the 50, a decision many residents were not happy about. Comparable areas nearby, such as Preston Park and Hollingbury, have multiple routes serving them, giving residents a fallback when a service is disrupted. This is not true in Hollingdean, an area which includes neighbourhoods

with some of the highest levels of deprivation in the city, where residents are less likely to own a car. The council's own data shows Hollingdean and Fiveways has one of the highest concentrations of young children in the city, and many families rely heavily on public transport to get around. When the council next reviews its Bus Service Improvement Plan, will it commit to reassessing the needs of single bus service communities like Hollingdean to ensure that no community in Brighton and Hove is disadvantaged by a lack of suitable public transport?

Response from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you, Sarah, for your question and feedback regarding bus services in Hollingdean. We agree that bus services need to provide essential connections for the Hollingdean area, for communities across the city. We are passionate about improving bus services and know how vital buses can be for families, for children, for low-income households. You raise a very important point and we're listening. Quite simply, fares are too high, especially in the cost of living crisis. We welcome yesterday's announcement by Labour Government to cap fares at £2. This is going to make a big difference.

We know that the local monopoly private operator Brighton Hove Buses took the commercial decision to withdraw the routes 18 and 50 to replace these with new route 20 connecting Hollingdean and Queen's Park via the city centre. These changes took effect from the 14th June and there are some positives such as a better connection to Brighton Station and Brighton Hove Buses have advised that these changes are intended to improve reliability, support long term viability of services in their view, and provide new cross city connections.

As a city council, we could not step in and cover the cost, especially at relatively short notice, within this year's budget. However, we appreciate any change to the public transport network is a sensitive matter and residents, passengers, really do matter. This is why I very much welcome our successful grant application to the Labour Government to review bus franchising, not just this city, but the Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority Area. Bus franchising will give residents a greater say and enable this Council and the Strategic Authority to fund less profitable routes and better service for people, for all, people before profit. So thank you for your feedback. We are listening. We do want to hear from residents how changes from the bus operators impact communities such as yours. The Council will consider needs of community across the city, including areas such as Hollingdean. With greater governance options, we will seek to implement improvements so we can have a bus service that serves all communities and a bus network that will significantly help address us tackle inequalities across the city.

Sarah Fitzgerald asked a supplementary question:

Thank you for that response. Just picking up on what you were saying about how bus services need to connect people. One of the things that residents asked for was a connection to Lewes Road Sainsbury's, and that has been implemented, but only in the late mornings and early afternoons on weekdays. I'm wondering if it would be possible for you to do something along the lines of what you did with the 1X to increase the frequency and make it something that actually works for working families?

Councillor Muten replied:

Yes, we are willing to look at that in the next piece of review. The 1X, we did put some kickstart money to enable that at the beginning. This quite late notice decision by Brighton and Hove Buses has meant we're not able to this financial year to step in and fund that connection. However, I do agree that's something we'd very happily look at and very happy to look at that in the context of a different governance model as we go forward so we can ensure that our communities are better connected and not just based on commercial reasons, but for what communities work with so we can balance the costs within either franchise or better governance model to enable that, thank you.

10. Robert Pickup asked:

On behalf of Hanover Action, Brighton & Hove has declared a climate and biodiversity emergency, and the Government's January 2026 national security assessment concludes that nature loss is now a systemic threat to the UK's food, water, health and economic security. The council's own Climate and Nature Action Plan does not yet reflect this urgency and lacks the measurable biodiversity targets and performance indicators such a threat demands. Given the council's duty to protect residents, will the administration commit to supporting and promoting viewings of the People’s Emergency Briefing film across Brighton & Hove, especially for council officers and in Brighton & Hove schools, so that those helping deliver the plan and the generation who will be most affected by it, fully understand the risks it is meant to address?

Response from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero and Environment Services:

Having attended the first screening of the People's Emergency Briefing here in the city myself, I can certainly attest to its powerful messaging, crucial at a time when progress is under threat from a narrative that seeks to deliberately deny
the unambiguous data and evidence that we have before us, much of which is presented, as we say, so powerfully in that film.

We certainly support screenings of the film and I personally urge anyone who hasn't seen it to see it. The advice of the filmmakers is that it's only suitable for audiences of age 16 and over, but if any schools and colleges were minded to show it to appropriate cohorts, then that is certainly something we would support. It's worth pointing out that we can't require schools to show it. That is quite rightly in the gift of the schools, but we would certainly support it if any schools or colleges chose to do so. I'm looking at the possibility of an internal screening, but I do want to reassure you that as a Council that has been recognised nationally with the highest possible rating for its climate leadership for the last three years on the trot, we do certainly fully understand the scale of the challenge.

Robert Pickup asked a supplementary question:

Considering Councils such as Liverpool have screened the film themselves rather than just supporting screenings, would you consider exploring how we can allow that to happen in Brighton and Hove, considering that we want to remain at that top level in comparison to other councils?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

The short answer is yes, I am interested in looking at local screenings. I think, just as an aside, I suppose something that I'm particularly interested in is how do we get the film or the core messages from the film in front of people who are least likely to voluntarily attend a screening? So, I think that's always one of the dangers here, isn't it, that we do these screenings and people who already are very well interested in this policy area come to see it, and that's great. You know, it's great to all coalesce and renew our energy in terms of what we can do. But I think getting this stuff out into the broader communities and the broader normalising it, not just as standalone climate action, but as climate action that's properly woven into all of the things that we do across the economy, I think is where I would like us to get to. That's obviously very complicated, but I would just add that as an aside.

11. Mariangela Vitolo asked:

The new 3X service is a welcome addition to Brighton & Hove's public transport network, improving connectivity and encouraging more people to travel by bus. However, residents have raised concerns about routing the service through Trafalgar Street, given its importance within the North Laine Conservation Area and the constraints of this historic street. The recent collision involving a bus and a shopfront has heightened concerns about pedestrian safety, businesses and property. How will the Council work with residents, Brighton & Hove Buses, heritage organisations and other stakeholders to monitor the route, address any safety concerns and protect the character of this important area, while ensuring the continued success of this valuable new service?

Response from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Positive welcome for the new 3X Cross City Express Service and specific concerns. Firstly, our thoughts are with the everyone affected by the recent incident on Trafalgar Street. We thank Emergency Services and the Brighton and Hove Buses Response Team for their professionalism in dealing with this situation. We take the safety of the public very seriously. Council officers have engaged with the local community and raised residents concerns directly with Brighton and Hove Buses, who operate the 3X and the 20 routes through the North Laine. We continue to work closely with the bus operator to understand the circumstances of this incident, identify any contributing factors, lessons learned and consider safety measures.

The 3X was introduced in September 2025 through the City Bus Service Improvement Plan to provide a fast, frequent cross-city connection, linking communities with jobs, education, healthcare, communities, transport hubs. Once we recognise local concerns, reliable bus services play an important role in reducing congestion and supporting access to one of the city's busiest and most vibrant areas. We are therefore considering this incident carefully and working with Brighton and Hove Buses to ensure any appropriate action is taken.

It is also worth noting that since its launch, the 3X has completed around 17,000 journeys on this route without incident, which I hope provides some reassurance. However, we will be carefully reviewing the circumstances of this incident, the report from Brighton and Hove Buses, and be working with the bus company and the local community to ensure we have a safer bus service in Trafalgar Street.

Mariangela Vitolo asked a supplementary question:

Thank you for your answer. I would like to know, please, if the Council has carried out a new road safety audit and a quality impact assessment of the area?

Councillor Muten replied:

We understand there is an investigation being assessed at the moment by the bus company in principle. We're working closely with them. We need to find the facts of this, but I do agree an understanding of the safety of this street is very important and we are prepared to look at a road safety audit and also consider what the contribution factors might have been to this incident. Thank you.

12. Lambros Fatsis asked:

What will the Council do to honour its Council of Sanctuary status by placing restrictions of banning the march of anti-immigration groups through the city?

Response from Councillor Alexander, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care:

Brighton and Hove City Council is proud of its Council of Sanctuary status and remains committed to being an anti-racist council that champions inclusion, equality, equity, and community cohesion. Whilst the Council does not have the power to prohibit lawful protest, we have been clear that demonstrations targeting migrants and refugee communities can have significant impacts on community confidence, safety and the feeling of wellbeing.

Ahead of the Ban the Boats demonstration in June, the Council did work extensively with Sussex Police, community organisations and faith groups, including through the One Voice Partnership. Sussex Police attended community briefings to hear concerns directly and the Council ensured that concerns raised by residents and partner organisations were shared with the police throughout the planning process. And then after the demonstration, the Council continued to support communities through a community feedback session with Sussex Police, again through the One Voice Partnership.

Communities described their concerns about intimidation, fear and the impact of repeated demonstrations on community cohesion, particularly amongst minority ethnic, faith, migrant and LBGTQI+ communities. In response to proposals for further marches, as you may have heard already this afternoon, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sankey, wrote to Sussex Police earlier this month highlighting the strong concerns of residents, community organisations, and elected members. She asked the Sussex Police to carefully consider the impact of repeated protests and the concerns that Brighton and Hove is being targeted because of its diversity and inclusivity, and whether the police were using all their available powers under the Public Order Act and other relevant legislation had been fully considered. The Council will consider to stand alongside all our communities, uphold our City of Sanctuary principles, and we will continue to work with partners to promote a safe, welcoming and cohesive city for everyone.

Lambros Fatsis asked a supplementary question:

I was actually present at the One Voice meeting and I didn't hear anything reassuring from Sussex Police. But I suppose my follow up question would be, how does the council not have

the power to ban such meetings when historically that has been the case in the past? For example, in 1979 when Ealing Council decided to ban the National Front from holding meetings in Southall.

Councillor Alexander replied:

I think that actually needs a legal answer, which I don't have in my head. Can I get back to you and respond once I've got the legal definition on what powers we actually do have?

18 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

18.1 The mayor reported that two deputations had been received from members of the public and invited the lead spokespersons to come forward and address the council.

18.2 Guy Hall presented the deputation concerning Brighton 53 Tram Project.

18.3 Councillor Sheard replied:

I'm answering on behalf of Councillor Robins as he couldn't be here this evening. I'd like, first of all, I just want to thank you for bringing this deputation on this item, which is such a big part of our city's heritage. Your effort to restore this once beloved lost piece of our history is truly a monument to the power of our community and its dedication to our history.

The Council have met with you and the Brighton Tram City Society on several occasions regarding their proposal. While the proposal is in no doubt an exciting one, at this time a direct pledge would not be granted. This is not specifically aimed at the Society, as we have given the same response to all organisations who have contacted the Council recently about proposals for the site.

At this moment in time, Home Farm Stanmer is currently being advertised on the open market and the Council has requested that anyone interested on the site submit to an expression of interest, a point you referenced in your speech. The Council has worked towards advertising Home Farm since the summer of 2025 and the Tram 53 Society has been one of the groups engaged with on this and as such has been invited to submit an EOI. We have informed the society of what the next steps are, but we are happy to reach out again if you have any questions.

At this moment in time, no decision has been made as the EOI process is open until the 1st September 2026. Once that deadline has passed, the Council will review the EOIs and work with its management agents to shortlist and invite full tenders. This process is important for the Council to follow as it allows for the Council to attract a wide audience of potential tenants and give the Council the opportunity to find the best considerations for this historic site. That includes traditional and grade listed agricultural buildings and land.

While this isn't the enthusiastic yes I'm sure you were hoping for, I hope that you don't feel too disheartened that this project of bringing back these wheels from our history is

an exciting one and I hope you will continue to serve this monument of our heart and hopefully it won't be too long until we see this rolling back into Brighton.

18.4 Lou Vaughan presented the deputation concerning Wellington House Day Centre.

18.5 Councillor Alexander replied:

Thank you, Lou, for your deputation and for setting out so clearly the concerns of families, carers, and supporters of the Wellington House Day Centre. As I said previously, we do recognise the strength of feeling about this proposal and the value placed on the service by the people who attend, their families, and the staff who work there.

It is important to be clear though that no decision has yet been made to close Wellington House. The decision taken at Budget Council in February was a budget proposal only. A final decision will be made by Cabinet in September as part of reviewing a report that will set out for feedback from all those who took part in the 12 weeks of consultation.

We have heard the concerns raised about the projected savings and the different unit costs of the service that have been referenced during the consultation. These differences are part due to the different moments in time when the calculations were made in relation to a change in the number of people attending and the number of staff working there at that moment.

The Cabinet report will set out the latest financial position at the time of it being published, including the current cost of running the service, the likely cost of alternative provision, and the extent to which the proposed savings remain deliverable. The Council's statutory duties to meet eligible assessed needs will remain unchanged. The proposal to have the needs of the 21 people met by independent sector providers is not about providing less. It is about providing differently and in a more cost-effective way.

So, whilst this proposal was part of budget setting, we know that it was not only a financial issue. We do recognise that it is about people's relationships, the routines, and family support. If Cabinet agrees any change to the current service then you can expect careful transition planning that is personally centred and co-produced with individuals, families, carers, and providers.

Again, I want to thank families, carers, staff, and supporters for the time, care and detail they put into the consultation and this deputation. The issues raised will be taken really seriously and will be reflected in the report to Cabinet before any final decision is made. Thank you.

18.6 RESOLVED:

That Council noted the following deputations:

1) Brighton 53 Tram Project; and
2) Wellington House Day Centre.

19 PETITION(S) FOR DEBATE

19.1 The mayor stated that the Council's Petition Scheme provide that where a petition secures 1,250 or more signatures it can be debated at a meeting of the Full Council. There were three petitions which had reached that threshold.

19.2 The mayor invited Alastair Gourlay to join the meeting and present the petition.

19.3 Alastair Gourlay on behalf of Carrie Florian presented a petition for debate titled 'Protect Our Local Independent Business (Red Route)'.

19.4 Councillor Muten replied:

My call is come with us. Listen to the facts, not the fear.

Say yes to safety, say yes to a safer Western Road that's more accessible for all.

Red routes are widely used in London, including on busy, vibrant shopping streets, not dissimilar from Western Road. Evidence in this city shows that red routes do not automatically reduce footfall. Far from it, on London Road, footfall increased following implementation. So come with us.

Bus passengers' safety is improved, with on-board accidents and incidents significantly reduced, according to Brighton and Hove Buses. Come with us.

Red Routes support bus reliability, reduce congestion, improve road safety, enable more reliable movement along key transport corridors such as Western Road. Journeys improved for commuters and city centre shoppers. Come with us.

Improved public transport reliability can increase accessibility for customers travelling by bus. People coming to Western Road to shop, eat, visit friends, socialise, enjoy a bakery treat, or night out. Come with us.

We have sought to solve this persistent problem of illegal parking. This Council takes its Equality Act duties extremely seriously, yet double yellow lines on Western Road are routinely abused, leaving even blue badge holders unable to park. Cars block pavements, vans obstruct dropped kerbs, access is restricted, sight lines impeded, making Western Road more hazardous than it needs to be, especially for disabled people who are less mobile and parents with buggies. Do not ask us to turn the blind eye. Equality in action for all matters. Instead, come with us.

Using BSIP funding, this Council provided full-time traffic wardens on Western Road. Time and time and time again, people leapt from businesses, be them employees or customers, to move their vehicles during the five-minute observation period before parking again around the block. They knew they were parking illegally and it took a traffic warden to prompt them to move. This is no solution, no offer to solve the problem, only a quest to continue looking the other way. No authority should acquiesce to such a request. Instead, come with us and make Western Road safer, fairer and more accessible for all.

Officers, ward councillors, and I attended the Cornerstone Brunswick that meeting. We heard your views, listened and explored options. When the chair of the Lansdowne Area Residents Association warned that somebody would be seriously hurt or worse because of irresponsible illegal parking, we all stopped. when LARA says help, someone is going to get hurt or worse. We cannot ignore this warning. Come with LARA, come with us. At our co-design workshop, residents, and visitors gathered around maps, placing yellow stickers on suggested solutions. We listened, adapted, worked together, co-designed. Come with us.

At present, Western Road has few disabled bays and fewer dedicated loading bays, with all too often 20 or even nearly 30 illegally parked vehicles blocking access for others. We propose that nowhere on this route will be more than 50 metres from a dedicated disabled parking bay. A huge improvement from what we have presently. Come with us. New loading bays will enable deliveries when needed for as long as it takes, no longer obstructed by illegal parking or having to move. Designed so buses can pass, car passengers can be dropped off and picked up, safer and better than we have now for all of us.

So come with us. Come with residents calling for a safer Western Road. Come with cyclists tired of near misses and collisions. Come with us to improve air quality and breathe. Come with us to make Western Road safer for all. Improve footfall and create a better place to be for you, your customers, your neighbours, for everyone in that community. Come with us.

A Freedom of Information request for penalty charge notices data for fiscal year 25/26, the first year of red routes in the city, says that 12,589 of the city's 18,108 CCTV and false PCNs, or 69.5% of all CCTV and false penalty charges, were issued at seven of the city's 50 CCTV enforced locations. The cynic in me is saying that this is about revenue raising for the Council. Why doesn't this part of Western Road have sufficient vigilance and traffic wardens? Surely that will sort out the problem.

As mentioned earlier, the figures quoted by the consultation responses do not give much of an endorsement for a red route. Delving further, it appears that the consultation was actively promoted to cycling groups, but not simultaneously promoted to businesses, disabled residents, or residents of streets likely to receive displaced traffic.

I understand that the Chair of the Brunswick Town Association has confirmed in writing in April this year that they were not officially consulted by the Council at any stage. The consultation contained no questions about traffic displacement into adjacent residential and conservation area streets. Furthermore, despite requests, there has not been any disclosed responses from Brighton and Hove Buses on the Western Road scheme. These reasons alone make an implementation of a red route scheme flawed. Looking at the plans, the number of proposed bays for disabled people appears totally insufficient. Also, I note that many of the bays are sited down the side streets, some 80% of them.

I propose, therefore, that further consultation is undertaken with residents, resident groups, businesses, and the public before any consideration of a trial red route scheme. Thank you.

19.5 Councillors Sykes and Lyons spoke on the matter.

19.6 Councillor Muten responded:

I want to thank you particularly Councillor Sykes, for your broad general support for this proposal, and I think you recognise the problem, and that's actually really helpful to do, and I think this is absolutely the starting point. I think that's been the thing that I've noticed within the public meetings that I've been to, the public engagement, we've had consultation, public consultation, which everybody has been welcomed to input into and invited to do. We certainly know prejudice on that. We're very keen to ask many people from this community to engage in that process, which many did, including a large number of residents, over half of whom were in broadly favour of this proposal, because it makes it safer. And I very much agree with Councillor Sykes, it is a game of cat and mouse, and Councillor Bagaeen, it is about safety, and the fact is we have illegal parking taking unnecessary risk causing this problem. And red routes are widely used in London, are tried elsewhere, including in the city, and there are significant improvements to the community, the shopping street, the use of the space, and the footfall does step up because people feel generally safer if they know that the sight lines are improved because there isn't a vehicle blocking them because illegal parking. Parking is laid out, red lines and yellow lines in fact are laid out for safety reasons and this is what this proposal does. It's about safety, it's about ensuring that.

So once these are in place. It'd be great if nobody gets caught on camera and we've got zero income because that means it's safer and it's working well. So, I just want to say again, come with us. This is a worthwhile thing to do. It will make Western Road safer and better for everybody, and improve footfall, and I'm sure businesses will benefit from that. Thank you.

RESOLVED:

1) That the petition be noted

20 CALL OVER FOR REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

(a) Call over

The following items on the agenda were reserved for discussion:

Item 23 – Coldean Neighbourhood Plan – Decision Notice

Item 25 – Review of Political Balance

Item 26 – Review of the Council’s Constitution

Item 27 – Youth Justice Plan 2026-29

(b) Receipt and/or Approval of Reports

The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that Items 23, 25, 26 and 27 had been reserved for discussion; and

The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the following reports on the agenda with the recommendations therein had been approved and adopted:

Item 24 – Appointment of Two New Independent Persons

21 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.

21.1 The mayor noted that written questions from Members and the replies from the appropriate Councillor were taken as read by reference to the list included in the addendum which had been circulated prior to the meeting as detailed below:

1. Councillor Earthey:

In the context of BHCC's Decarbonisation strategy and its response to changes in central government energy policy, please provide an update on BHCC local policy on :
a) Installation of onshore wind capacity within the City's boundaries, and reaching agreement with the SDNP for suitable sites;
b) Installation of battery storage capacity on BHCC-owned brownfield sites;
c) Finding alternative sources of grant funding for domestic insulation, given that the Warmer Homes funding scheme has already reached capacity, risking a huge backlog in applications;
d) Enforcing BHCC freeholder rights over leaseholders of BHCC properties who refuse to engage with BHCC and the local community for the installation of solar PV arrays on the council buildings they lease.

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

Our decarbonisation pathways study suggests that there are few sites in the city that are unambiguously suitable for onshore wind. Notwithstanding, we are certainly open to conversations to consider suitable sites.

The council is not currently exploring battery storage opportunities in detail, as Brighton & Hove is not currently within a local flexibility market area, meaning the local distribution network operator would not pay for use of battery storage.

Regarding domestic retrofit, the Warm Homes Plan, published in January, includes £15 billion of public investment to upgrade up to 5 million homes and lift up to a million families out of fuel poverty by 2030. It includes grants and loans for homeowners to install heat pumps, solar panels and batteries; direct support for home upgrades for those on low incomes and in fuel poverty; and new rules to ensure

landlords invest. In addition, one of the aims of a Strategic Energy Partnership would be to cross-subsidise retrofit with other projects.

It is unlikely there is any legal obligation for the leaseholder to engage with the council or the community on the installation of solar PV on the buildings that they lease, unless this right was specifically reserved within the lease for the benefit of the council. It would be more appropriate to adopt a consultative and collaborative approach to achieve the lessee's support for such a proposal.

2. Councillor Earthey:

Please provide an update on the City's Glyphosate Weed Control Programme – has it achieved its publicly-stated objectives to date, and what is BHCC's future weed control strategy?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

The following changes have been made to the weed management programme in 2026:

- 2 main treatment cycles, plus a 'hotspot' treatment for known problem areas. This is a reduction from 3 full cycles in 2025.
- 2 teams moving towards the centre, one from the east and one from the west. Last year it was 1 team moving across the city, meaning slower progress and more disruption due to weather
- 123 street in the opt-out scheme, up from 40 in 2025
- 2 new trials – hot foam and a new e-weeding machine

The objectives have been met in terms of controlling growth while minimising glyphosate use (via Controlled Droplet Application).

The policy is one of reduction and minimisation and will be outlined further in an imminent policy paper due for publication later in the summer.

3. Councillor Barton Ahmad:

With regard to Goldsmid ward and the recent new developments within the ward, what is the council doing to monitor occupancy and ensure that these developments do not remain unoccupied?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing:

Private developers are responsible for actively marketing completed properties for sale or rent. For larger developments, achieving full occupancy may take time as homes are released, marketed and occupied in phases.

Where the developer is a Registered Provider, the council will monitor progress through our regular engagement meetings with them. New rented homes will be let through the Housing Register, and we will engage with them to better understand the challenges

associated with shared ownership sales and to identify any barriers that may be affecting the rate of occupation

In April 2024 the council introduced an additional council tax premium on homes that have been empty for over a year and, since April 2025, this premium was also applied to second homes. These financial penalties are intended to encourage occupation rather than leaving homes vacant and apply to new and existing housing. In addition, our Empty Property Team will make contact with owners and discuss their options for bringing the properties into use.

4. Councillor Pickett:

In light of the recent hot weather, and in anticipation of the deluge that will follow, what is the council doing to pre-empt the anticipated flooding that will probably be worse than ever before and in the knowledge that calls within certain areas to clear blocked drains are being ignored eg bottom of Preston Drove?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you for your question, Cllr Pickett. In line with the recommendations set out in the Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice, the Council adopts a risk-based approach to gully cleansing to ensure resources are targeted where they can have the greatest impact. Following a detailed review of historic silt levels in 2023, the cleansing programme was enhanced to provide increased attention to higher-risk locations. As a result, gullies near properties with a history of surface water flooding are now cleansed twice a year, compared with every 18 months under the previous regime. Other gullies are cleansed annually, every two years, or every four years, depending on historic silt accumulation and assessed flood risk. The revised approach was presented to Members at the Transport and Sustainability Committee on 6 February 2024.

This targeted programme has enabled the Council to focus maintenance activity where it is most needed, helping to improve the resilience of the highway drainage network across the city. While regular cleansing is effective in many cases, access can occasionally be restricted by parked vehicles, preventing the cleansing equipment from reaching individual gullies. Where this occurs, efforts are made to return and complete the work at a later date.
The Council works closely with its contractor and holds regular performance meetings to monitor progress against the programme, review any issues that arise, and identify solutions where gullies have been missed or require additional attention. Despite the significant financial pressures facing local authorities, we remain committed to maintaining the drainage network as effectively as possible and to prioritising investment where it will deliver the greatest benefit for residents and communities most at risk of flooding. A data-led policy implementation review including gully risk classification and frequency of access will progress where specific concerns are raised.

5. Councillor Pickett:

It is well documented that older people and children are most at risk of suffering health issues when it comes to pollution. Does the council have any plans to consolidate

transport, environment and public health policy, joining up the statistics that prove that a reduction in traffic, woodburning, etc, correlates with improved health outcomes?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

The Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) and Annual Status Reports (ASR) are the council's primary mechanisms for fulfilment of its duties in relation to air quality. The AQAP is multidisciplinary, with partnership working that addresses road traffic emissions, events, construction, port activities and solid fuel burning.

The ASR covers all of the topics listed, providing a citywide overview supported by charts, tables and trend data. Within the road traffic category, the report includes separate data for buses, Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) and private cars. The Director of Public Health has also provided a foreword to the report.
The annual report explains how air quality and pollution are monitored across Brighton & Hove, outlines the actions taken by the council to improve air quality, and reports on the progress made against those measures. Information on particulate matter is also available through the Department of Health and Social Care's Fingertips public health data resource.

6. Councillor Hill:

Can papers for the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority meetings be available on the Brighton & Hove City Council website? Currently I have to use the East Sussex County Council site to get information.

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council:

Thanks for the question Cllr Hill. Despite vocal Green opposition to devolution for Brighton and Sussex, I am glad to see you are still taking an interest. We do not publish outside body agendas on our website our system does not permit this for agendas not published by us. SBSA Board papers are currently hosted on the East Sussex County Council website. The SBSA website has now been set up and it is expected that Board papers will be published on the SBSA website in due course.

7. Councillor Hill:

By April 2027, the East Sussex Fire Authority Board will be dissolved and the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority will take over their powers as well as for West Sussex. I do not agree with these proposals as I believe there will be weaker democratic oversight for Fire & Rescue without a bespoke authority dedicated to Fire & Rescue matters. There is a high level of risk involved to ensure day 1 readiness when the transfer completes. As Chair of the Strategic Authority, Cllr Bella Sankey will have some responsibility towards this. How will Cllr Sankey use her new role to ensure this transition is managed as smoothly as possible?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council:

The transfer of Fire and Rescue Authority functions into the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority forms part of the Government's wider devolution agenda. The objective is to place fire and rescue governance under directly elected mayors, improve democratic accountability, support the integration of emergency and public services, align public service boundaries, and simplify local governance arrangements.

These changes, enabled through the Government's devolution legislation, are focused on governance and accountability rather than altering operational command or emergency response activities.

Recognising that the transfer of Fire and Rescue Authority functions is one of the most significant responsibilities the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority will undertake by April 2027, the role of Strategic Authority Board members will be to ensure that robust governance, effective scrutiny, and clear assurance arrangements are established and maintained throughout the transition programme.

SBSA officers are working closely with the existing Fire & Rescue Authorities and Fire & Rescue Services in East Sussex and West Sussex, alongside Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government officials, and our Chief Fire Officers to ensure that the transition is delivered safely, transparently and in a manner that protects service continuity and maintains public confidence.

8. Councillor Hill:

Has Cllr Sankey met with Mark Matthews, Chief Fire Officer for the East Sussex Fire & Rescue service to discuss changes to governance arrangements that affect the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service since her election as Chair of the Strategic Authority?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council:

I was elected as the Chair of the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority on 1st July and I have not yet held a formal meeting with Mark Matthews specifically on the governance changes affecting East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, noting that the transition of Fire & Rescue Authority powers and responsibilities is a collective Board responsibility.

However, the SBSA transition programme includes structured engagement between the Strategic Authority and Fire and Rescue leadership. The Fire & Rescue Transition Plan provides for regular engagement with authority leaders and Fire Authority Chairs, while operational readiness is being led with support from both Chief Fire Officers through the Operational Readiness workstream and the FRA/FRS Transition Board. Their professional expertise and operational independence will remain fundamental to the delivery of fire and rescue services.

9. Councillor Hill:

Park Crescent remains at risk of pluvial flooding, especially this autumn. Has the Council been able to determine if a bump in the road between Park Crecent and Lewes Road would be helpful to push the water towards The Level rather than into Park Crescent? This is different to the previous barrier which was in the middle of Lewes Road.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you for your question, Cllr Hill. I most recently visited Elm Grove on 20th July and plan further visits. I am very mindful of residents' concerns, we are listening and taking action.

We acknowledge the ongoing surface water flooding concerns at this location and recognise the impact this can have on residents and highway users. The council's Flood Risk Management and Highway Maintenance teams have been working together to investigate the issue and identify potential solutions.

Following further assessment, it has been concluded that a raised table would not be an appropriate solution for this location, as it does not meet the current design standards required for a junction of this type.

The wider Elm Grove catchment has been included within the council's Surface Water Management Citywide Feasibility Study. This work will provide the Flood Risk Management team with a range of options for managing flood risk across the catchment and will help identify the most effective long-term interventions. The outcomes of the study will also be used to develop a business case for external funding, including potential support from the Environment Agency, to enable the delivery of flood mitigation measures throughout the Elm Grove catchment.

This ongoing study represents an important step towards securing sustainable, catchment-wide improvements that will help reduce flood risk both here and across the wider area.

10. Councillor Hill:

The East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has no statutory responsibility to respond to flooding incidents and therefore is not funded to help with these incidents even though they do. Other strategic authorities provide funding to their Fire & Rescue Services to help fund this although it really should be a government funded responsibility. Can Cllrs on the Strategic Authority consider this in future when they have the relevant powers in future to affect this change?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council:

The creation of the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA) provides significant opportunities to align our resources with the priorities of our region, and this will include the approach to public safety, which is a core area of competence for the SBSA.

As SBSA assumes Fire and Rescue Authority responsibilities from 2027 and Police and Crime Commissioner responsibilities from 2028, there will be greater opportunity to realise the benefits of regional alignment and coordination of funding for public safety, including emergency responses.

11. Councillor Shanks:

When will the CIL allocations be decided. Residents have been waiting?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation:

Following the short listing exercise completed by ward councillors, the various services have been developing cost estimates and checking that proposals are policy compliant. Due to the large number of projects involved and the need for services to maintain a focus on day to day operations, this is taking longer than initially hoped. However, I expect this work to be concluded by early August.

In some wards, all projects have now been costed and the Planning Service is in contact with those ward councillors for them to agree their final shortlist for my delegated sign off as a priority.

In your ward, half of the shortlisted projects have been costed already at approximately £120k,with a budget of circa £50k available. The Planning Service has recently written to you with suggestions on how your shortlist could be rationalised to focus resources on costing a reduced number of outstanding schemes to enable a consensus to be reached as soon as possible.

12. Councillor Shanks:

Why are scrutiny call ins not given full financial information on which to base their decision?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council:

When a call-in request has been accepted, officers will provide the Overview & Scrutiny Call-in Committee with all the information it requires to undertake its responsibilities. This will always include the original public Cabinet report and its appendices.

In instances where Cabinet also considered confidential (Part 2) information, consideration is given on a case-by-case basis as to whether this information can be shared with the Call-in Committee. This is based on whether the sensitive information is relevant to consideration of the issues identified in the call-in request and the nature of the commercial sensitivity. In some instances to date this has resulted in Part 2 reports being shared with the Call-in Committee in their entirety; in other instances, restricted reports have been shared, but with commercially sensitive information that is not relevant to the call-in request redacted. The aim is to support a robust call-in process whilst respecting the legal principle that exempt or confidential information should not be shared more widely than is required.

13. Councillor Lademacher:

How are improvements to the public realm prioritised fairly across all wards, particularly in the ones that have historically received fewer resources and/or have high levels of socio-economic inequality (like Queen’s Park)?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation:

I am committed to creating a clean, inclusive, green, and vibrant public realm that reflects Brighton & Hove's unique character and supports the wellbeing of all who live, work, and visit here. That applies to shopping parades on the outskirts of the city as well as the bustling city centre. Interventions are often triggered based upon on requests from the public and their representatives, available funding pots including from external partners such as Network Rail, and political priorities from the administration such as the removal of redundant phoneboxes.

I have joined our fantastic neighbourhood officers on an estate walkabout where public realm issues are identified and logged for action. These are taking place across the city including areas of higher inequality. Queens Park ward last had an inspection on sixteen days ago.

14. Councillor Lademacher:

Given new enforcement powers introduced under the Renters' Rights Act, which allow local authorities in England to issue civil penalties of up to £7,000 where serious Category 1 hazards are found in privately rented homes, how does the Council intend to enforce these new powers?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing:

Cabinet agreed a new Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy in April 2026. This new policy is important because it provides a clear framework for enforcing the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation in a fair, consistent and proportionate way which is aligned with government statutory guidance. This policy also included our revised approach to setting civil penalty notices.

We will investigate the complaint to determine whether a civil penalty should be issued and will consider the available evidence to reach this decision. We will then consider factors such as the severity of the breach, harm or potential harm to tenants, whether the landlord has a history of non-compliance, whether the breach was deliberate, and any aggravating or mitigating circumstances when deciding the level of penalty. We will take a robust approach to rogue landlords and use enhanced enforcement powers where landlords repeatedly or seriously breach their legal obligations.

15. Councillor McLeay:

Residents of Theobald House were told in 2023 that a children's play area could not be provided because major works were imminent, yet those works may now not begin until 2028. At the same time, families with children, including those with additional needs, continue to live in unsuitable conditions (on the 11th floor), alongside ongoing safety and ASB concerns. What is the council doing to improve the safety and wellbeing of children living in tower blocks such as Theobald House?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing:

We recognise residents' concerns about the lack of play space for children at Theobald House and the delay to the major works programme. The project has taken longer than expected due to the specialist surveys, design work and approvals needed, including Building Safety Regulator requirements. We appreciate the frustration this has caused, particularly as residents were previously advised that a permanent play area was not possible because works were expected to start sooner.

While the longer-term works are progressed, the Project Manager will contact the residents by the end of this week [24th July] and arrange to meet with them. The project manager will then explore with residents what temporary improvements can be provided. This will include interim play facilities or enhancements to communal spaces where these can be delivered safely.

We also continue to address concerns about estate safety and anti-social behaviour through estate inspections, responding to reports from residents, and working with Sussex Police and other partners. We recognise that some families, including those with children who have additional needs, may face additional challenges living in high-rise accommodation and will continue to work with them to understand and respond to their needs.

We will keep residents updated on both the major works programme and any interim measures identified to support families living at Theobald House.

16. Councillor McLeay:

Theobald House has been wrapped in scaffolding for around five years because concrete was falling from the building. Residents are now being told that repairs may still be years away, with a possible start date of 2028. How can the council justify a delay of more than seven years to resolve what is fundamentally a building safety issue, and what assurances can be given to residents that this timetable will be improved?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing:

We recognise that the continued presence of the scaffolding and crash deck has had a significant impact on residents, particularly as it has remained in place for an extended period. We appreciate the patience and understanding residents have shown as we have kept them updated as part of working through what is a complex and highly regulated programme of building safety works.

The scaffolding at ground floor level forms a safety "crash deck", designed to protect residents and members of the public from any potential risk arising from the building. Although urgent concrete repairs to the lower levels have already been completed, specialist advice confirms that the crash deck must remain in place until the wider programme of works can be carried out safely.

We are currently finalising the design, specification and full scope of works required at Theobald House. To minimise future disruption and avoid multiple applications, we have expanded the project to include all necessary works identified by three separate Housing services within a single submission to the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).

This has required detailed input from specialist consultants and technical experts and has taken longer than originally anticipated.

We expect to appoint a Principal Contractor by November and will then submit the full application to the BSR. Regrettably, current BSR approval times remain in excess of 40 weeks, and we must plan on that basis. However, if approval is received sooner, we will be in a position to commence works immediately.

Throughout this process, we have sought to keep residents informed through regular updates and have involved them in discussions about elements of the design and proposed works. We remain committed to continuing that engagement and to delivering the works as quickly and safely as possible, while recognising the inconvenience and uncertainty that the delays have caused for those living in the building.

17. Councillor McLeay:

Parks for London recommends protecting public access to parks, limiting the impact of large-scale events, and being transparent about how event income is spent. Following two summers of intensive event use at The Level and Valley Gardens, residents have seen significant deterioration of grassed areas, yet the Cabinet Lead confirmed last year there were "no current plans for sprinkler systems or turf replacement, with reinstatement considered only on a case-by-case basis". What is the council's long-term plan to protect these green spaces, how much has been collected in reinstatement fees over the last two years, and how much of that money has been spent restoring The Level and Valley Gardens?

Reply from Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries:

The council recognises the importance of protecting public green spaces while balancing the cultural, community and economic benefits that events can bring to the city. Event organisers are required to implement measures to minimise damage to park infrastructure and grassed areas, and post-event inspections are undertaken to identify any remedial works that may be required.

With regard to reinstatement costs, it is important to note that Brighton & Hove City Council does not collect reinstatement fees. Where reinstatement works are required, the costs are charged directly by the council's appointed specialist contractor to the event organiser. Consequently, the council does not receive or retain any of these payments.

The council continues to work with its parks and events teams to monitor the condition of The Level and Valley Gardens and to identify appropriate maintenance and restoration measures where necessary.

Decisions regarding reinstatement works are informed by site inspections, operational requirements, available resources and the condition of the affected areas. The council also reviews event impacts as part of its ongoing management of events within the city's parks and open spaces to ensure that public access and the long-term quality of these spaces are appropriately protected.

As reinstatement charges are paid directly to the contractor rather than the council, the council is unable to provide figures for the amounts collected or spent on restoration works through this arrangement.

18. Councillor Sykes:

Please provide a figure for total spend to end June on the King Alfred Leisure Centre project and the projected updated programme to completion as it stood at end June.

Reply from Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries:

As at the end of June 2026, the total capital expenditure on the King Alfred Regeneration project is £6.12m. This spend is well within the £8.5m budget drawdown so far agreed by Cabinet. As a reminder, an initial drawdown of £2.7m was agreed at the July 2024 Cabinet, a further £2.3m at the September 2025 Cabinet, and most recently, £3.5m at April 2026 Cabinet.

This figure reflects all work completed on the project to date, including the appointment of the professional team, development of the detailed designs up to RIBA 4a, and the submission of the planning application which is due to be determined at Planning Committee later this month. In addition to the design work, the expenditure also covers the enabling works completed on site. This includes the asbestos removal works conducted between December 2025 and April 2026, the biodiversity net gain planting works on the adjacent Hove Lawns event space, and the relocation of UK Power Network cables.

The programme continues with demolition scheduled to begin this summer, and construction of the new facility to commence at the start of 2027. Completion is expected for autumn 2029.

19. Councillor Sykes:

Please provide a log of the number of refuse and recycling trucks of all types that were out of action in the month of June, by date and issue.

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

In total the number of refuse collection vehicles defected in June = 12 – workshop have provided the following information and dates:

05.05.26 - WWT – default – Tyres & wiper
09.06.26 - VVL – default – Unidentified noise
09.06.26 - CWP – default – Emergency stop not working
10.06.26 - FZR – default – Bin lift not operating
11.06.26 - BVV – default – Rear light out
17.06.26 - AWG – default – Overheating
19.06.26 - EUZ – default – Bulb out
20.06.26 - LJR – default – Ingress & exit doors not working
23/24.06.26 - BYB – default – various issues identified

24.06.26 - EEW – default – Various issues identified
30.06.26 - BVW – default – suspension collapse on near-side.

20. Councillor Sykes:

The BHCC Perkbox offers savings for council employees. However, all the offers are with multinational companies. What happened to supporting the local economy?

Reply from Councillor McGregor, Cabinet Member for Economy, Culture, Heritage & Tourism:

I agree that supporting our local economy is important, and value contribution local businesses make to Brighton & Hove.

At the same time, we have a responsibility to provide an attractive employment offer for our staff, supporting the workforce to deliver their best for the city. Perkbox offers employees the opportunity to reap discounts and savings. It also provides access to 24/7 mental health support, a GP service and wellbeing resources. These benefits help support our workforce, strengthen our position as an employer of choice while delivering savings for the council.

I would welcome greater participation from local businesses. However, the council does not have the capacity to identify, negotiate and maintain individual offers at this time. Using a provider enables these relationships to be managed on our behalf. Local businesses can register an interest in joining the platform, with participating offers selected independently by Perkbox.

Alongside this, we'll continue to promote local offers to staff to support local spending via the internal Company Benefits section on Perkbox, separate to their marketplace, providing another way to support local businesses while complementing the platform's benefits and wellbeing offer.

21. Councillor Sykes:

Road drains are blocked all over the city and this increases risk of surface water flooding. Please state the in-house and bought-in resource (FTE or cash) planned for drain clearance in 2026-27 and indicate how many road drains are no longer planned for clearance due to resource shortage.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you for your question, Cllr Sykes.

The council is taking a proactive approach to reducing the risk of surface water flooding across the city, recognising the increasing impact of extreme weather events and the need to improve resilience to climate change.

In line with the Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice, the council operates a risk-based gully cleansing programme. Following a review of historic

silt levels and flooding records in 2023, the programme was strengthened so that gullies in areas with a known history of flooding are now cleansed twice yearly, while all other gullies are cleansed at frequencies determined by risk and historic asset performance. This ensures resources are targeted where they can have the greatest benefit.

The council also continues to work with partners, including Southern Water, to better understand flood risks across the city and identify opportunities for investment in drainage infrastructure and wider flood resilience measures. This work supports the council's longer-term approach to managing the increasing challenges associated with climate change and more frequent intense rainfall events.

In addition to routine maintenance, the council closely monitors contractor performance, investigates reports of drainage concerns and reviews locations where additional intervention may be required. Recruitment is currently underway for a dedicated Drainage Engineer, a role that has been vacant for the last three years. This additional specialist resource will strengthen the council's capacity to manage drainage assets, oversee maintenance programmes and coordinate flood risk activities ahead of the winter period.

While no drainage system can completely prevent flooding during exceptionally intense rainfall, particularly where highway drainage systems, soakaways and the wider sewer network are operating at capacity, the council continues to invest in a targeted, evidence-led approach that focuses resources on the areas of greatest risk and supports the city's long-term flood resilience.

22. Councillor West:

The Government has recognised the mistake of halting councillors pensions and members are now permitted to join their local LGPS scheme. Why has the administration not yet set this up, the delay is unacceptable. Contributions should be back dated. Will they be?

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration:

We are pleased that our Labour Government has overturned the Tory-Lib Dem Coaliton decision to scrap councillor pensions. Councillors were allowed to join the pension scheme from the 11th of May and guidance from the Fund followed in due course. The payroll team did ask whether the contributions could be backdated for those members who have responded and decided to opt in. The scheme has confirmed very recently that for those members who have their first contribution in July 26, contributions can be backdated to June and this will be actioned and communicated to those members.

23. Councillor De Oliveira:

What speed measure are taken to regulate smart paddle bikes and scooters as some can reach up to 40 miles per hour endangering vulnerable residents?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you for your question, Cllr De Oliveira.

The maximum legal assisted speed for an e-bike is 15.5mph, and it is illegal to modify or "derestrict" an e-bike to exceed this limit. Some vehicles used by gig economy delivery riders resemble e-bikes but are closer to electric mopeds, using a handlebar throttle that operates independently of pedalling. These vehicles can travel at higher speeds and are often unregistered.

The Government had planned legislation to provide a clearer regulatory framework for these vehicles, but this was not included in the King's Speech in May 2026 due to parliamentary time pressures. In the meantime, the illegal use of these vehicles remains a matter for police enforcement.

Council officers in Trading Standards and Transport are working with Sussex Police to support planned enforcement activity. It should also be noted that privately owned e-scooters remain illegal to use on the public highway.

To coincide with the launch of the city's legal e-scooter hire trial, the council is delivering a public awareness campaign reminding residents that privately owned e-scooters are not permitted on public roads, pavements or cycle lanes. The campaign highlights the safety risks associated with illegal and modified vehicles.

Within the legal hire scheme, e-scooters will be limited to a maximum speed of 12.5mph, with lower limits of 6.5mph in designated areas. The city's hire e-bikes are restricted to the legal maximum assisted speed of 15.5mph.

24. Councillor McNair:

The way residents report missed bin collections has changed. Instead of being able to report a missed collection, residents are now told that the council knows that their bin hasn't been collected, in effect stopping residents from reporting it. After a few days, the default seems to be no collection and no way to report it. Residents are also often told their bin was not out when it was. Or that it was collected when it wasn't. The IT system rarely seems to be accurate. Why has the reporting system changed and when can we expect it to work accurately?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

When a collection is missed (and logged as such on our system by the crew or operations managers), it is effectively automatically reported. In other words, the team know it has been missed and are already trying to reallocate it. In these cases, there is no need for the resident to report it and so no option to do so is provided. The valuable reports are of missed collections we do *not* know about and if there are a large number of reports of missed collections that we *do* already know about, it only makes getting to the ones we don't know about that much harder.

However, we are reviewing the wording on the website to make this clearer to residents.

The statement that the system is ‘rarely’ accurate is incorrect. It is accurate in the vast majority of cases. However, the instances where it isn’t clearly cause concern and need to be addressed.

The reason the reporting system has changed is that the whole operation used to run on scraps of paper. The operations team was more reliant on reports from residents as there was no direct or automatic link between crews and the operations centre.

Since the digital system has been fully deployed, there is a constant and live link between the vehicles and the operations centre, which includes missed collections being automatically logged and instantly visible to controllers. There is no value in receiving reports of missed collections we already know about – it just creates additional administrative burden.

25. Councillor McNair:

Why is it proving impossible to have yellow lines provided to prevent dangerous parking in Patcham & Hollingbury? We have requested lines where there is risk to pedestrians and motorists due to badly parked cars, e.g. on the corners of roads in Rotherfield Crescent, but we are always told there is a lack of money. This is a typical quote:
“We have advised them that due to limited resources, our current focus is on maintaining existing parking restrictions. Regrettably we are unable to consider any changes to the public highway outside of controlled parking zones, except for disabled bay requests or busy junctions on or near the main road network where safety to all road users is of concern.”
However, there is money for red routes in the centre of town. Why is the safety of residents in Patcham & Hollingbury of less concern?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you for your question, Cllr McNair.

Officers have investigated the request in Rotherfield Crescent, and a section of new no waiting restrictions have recently been installed at the junction of Carden Hill.

If there are other areas of Rotherfield Crescent or the wider area where residents are concerned about safety at junctions, they can submit a request to the Parking Design & Implementation Team who will investigate.

Requests for new parking restrictions are assessed individually on their own merits and are prioritised according to evidence of safety risk and urgency across the city. Officers use a range of information to inform these decisions, including collision data supplied by Sussex Police, traffic conditions, road layout, visibility at junctions, and the potential impact on all road users.

Red Routes are funded by BISIP funding from central government to improve road safety and reduce congestion by making bus travel more attractive through improved bus travel times. The funding is ring-fenced to improve bus services and scheduling so can’t be used for other projects.

Nonetheless, this call for more restrictions and effective enforcement is noted and requests and options for future improvements can assist future planning.

26. Councillor Meadows:

Fly tipping in Orchid View is extremely frequent. Can we have CCTV fitted, as it is in Bramble Way and Birch Grove Crescent, to deter fly tipping and, ultimately raise money for a cash-strapped council?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

Thank you for raising your concerns about the frequent fly-tipping in Orchid View.

We will add Orchid View to our list of locations for assessment and consideration. The deployment of CCTV is prioritised based on a range of factors, including the volume of reported incidents, evidence of persistent fly-tipping, and intelligence gathered by our officers and enforcement staff.

We continuously review reports and intelligence across the city to identify locations where CCTV is likely to be most effective in deterring offences and assisting with enforcement action. Your feedback helps inform that process, and Orchid View will be included in future reviews.

In the meantime, please continue to report any fly-tipping incidents, as this information contributes to our assessment of problem locations and helps us target resources where they are most needed.

27. Councillor Meadows:

There were abandoned bike frames left chained to a bike rack in Patcham Old Village for months. They were retagged on 14th May for removal 14 days later – so 28th May – because the original tag for removal had no date. But, they still have not been removed on 2nd July. If notices are not followed through a) offenders will be encouraged to abandon bikes and vehicles with impunity b) it looks to residents that the council does not care about such ‘trivial’ matters. Why were the bikes not removed at the expiry date on the notice?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

The responsibility for investigating, tagging and tracking abandoned bicycles sits with our Highways colleagues. Once bicycles or bike frames have been identified and the appropriate notices have expired, the physical collection and removal are carried out by the Bin and Box Team.

Unfortunately, due to recent staffing shortages within the collection service, removals have been taking longer than usual, which has led to a backlog of tagged bicycles awaiting collection across the city, including those in Patcham Old Village.

We understand your concerns regarding the bike frames that were tagged on 14 May and appreciate that when items remain in place beyond the stated removal date, it can undermine confidence in the process and create the impression that abandoned property is not being actively managed.

To address this issue, we are currently seeking agency cover to support the service and recommence regular collections, with the aim of reducing the backlog and improving removal timescales.

Thank you for your patience and for bringing this matter to our attention.

28. Councillor Theobald:

Rubbish, recycling and garden waste collections have been very inconsistent over the past few weeks. In particular, garden waste collections have been frequently missed despite residents paying extra for the service. Residents are also frequently told they had not left their garden waste out for collection when they have. Why is Garden Waste not being collected regularly and will residents receive extensions to their subscriptions?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services:

The service has been suffered withs frequent vehicle breakdowns that have impacted significantly on our ability to collect garden waste on the scheduled day. It is recognised that this is very frustrating to customers that have paid for a service. Environmental Services colleagues have a number of initiatives in train that will improve the service. Regarding your specific question about extension on subscriptions, garden waste service has now moved to a fixed April to March subscription period to ensure that all payments and collections align. Missed collections will now be compensated through adjustments to payments rather than extended subscription periods. We will be writing imminently to subscribers to clarify this.

29. Councillor Theobald:

At a previous Council Meeting I spoke in favour of the retention of Wellington House. On 23 June, Cllr Alexander circulated an email in which she stated that "there are 6 other providers of day opportunities for adults with learning difficulties in the city." Would Cllr Alexander please confirm where each of these centres are located, who operates them and whether all 21 current users of Wellington House would be able to be placed in one of them should the Administration decide to close Wellington House. I am advised that there are no Day Centres in Brighton and Hove to which all the current users can be transferred hence I strongly believe that Wellington House should not be closed.

Reply from Councillor Alexander, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care:

The council is working with six main providers of day opportunities for adults with learning difficulties in the city.

These Providers (see below) support varied needs, some of whom support people with complex needs. BHCC is also in the process of recommissioning to attract new providers and this process is concluding.

There are some places within the current provision but there will also be a need for providers to expand provision to meet need both for Wellington House and future demand. This is because it is usual practice for providers to work to capacity, and not to operate with vacancies, as it would not be financially viable for them to employ staff and run with vacancies.

Commissiong are currently talking to current and potentially new providers about expanding their capacity should this be required following the decision made at Cabinet on 17th September.

This information will be shared within the Consultation report that will go to Cabinet on 17th September to enable a decision to be made based on full current transparent information.

Current Independent Sector Adult Learning Disability Day provision providers:

	Provider	Model
1	Ambito	Building based. Supports those with complex physical and behavioural needs, can provide additional 1:1 support. Strong PBS offer. Can provide some transport.
2	Aspirations Active	Building based. Supports those with complex behavioural needs who require focused support. Strong PBS offer.
3	Down Syndrome Development Trust	Building based at Falmer University. Supports YP to increase their independence, work with students. Provide focused support sessions.
4	Grace Eyre Foundation	Building based in a range of locations across the city. Support people with moderate needs who can be in a small group. Wide range of activities offered.
5	Team Domenica	Supports young people to increase their independence through learning of skills and experience – ie café/pub. Support into work placements.
6	Rockets	Very small building base. Arts offer on 1:1 basis.

30. Councillor Lyons:

A number of residents in Woodlands have contacted me, requesting an additional lampstand (at least one) at the end of the close, as it is very dark at nighttime. The response that they and I have received to their requests is that ‘The Street Lighting Team are not funded for the installation of additional lighting requests across the city & are only funded for the maintenance of the existing stock. Funds would need to be found to finance the new installation then the team would be able to adopt the new lighting

assets and add them to the inventory and maintenance regime.' Can I ask that the close is added for consideration for additional street lighting at next year's budget?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you for your question, Cllr Lyons. The council is responsible for maintaining over 22,000 street lighting columns across the city, together with the associated energy and operational costs. Given the significant pressures on existing maintenance budgets, current investment is focused on maintaining and renewing the existing network.

The council takes a forward-looking planned approach to the installation of new street lighting columns. In most cases, new lighting is delivered as part of new developments, highway improvement schemes or wider regeneration projects.

Requests for additional lighting are recorded and considered as part of future budget-setting and capital investment processes, alongside other competing priorities across the transport and highways service. The location identified will be added to the team's records for consideration within future funding opportunities.

31. Councillor Lyons:

21 households in Artists Corner have contacted me, requesting a review of the parking situation in their streets. The preferred solution is to reduce the 4-hour parking paid bays to 2 hours, which may deter residents in other roads taking up spaces from 16:00 or alternatively, extending the paid bay service to beyond 20:00. Can this be investigated further?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you, Cllr Lyons, for raising this issue with me. Parking Services has previously been contacted by a resident of the Artists Corner area requesting a reduction in the maximum stay period for the paid parking bays. The current parking arrangements were introduced following extensive consultation with local residents and other stakeholders and were designed to reflect the balance of views expressed at that time.

We recognise that parking pressures and local circumstances can change over time and can, therefore, reconsider existing arrangements where there is clear evidence of strong local support.

This call for extending parking restrictions beyond 8pm as option requiring further review is noted. Officers advised that, before any changes to these restrictions could be considered, the Council would need such evidence of broader support from those residents and stakeholders likely to be directly affected. A petition or deputation from local residents and stakeholders is an effective way of demonstrating the level of local support for a review.

32. Councillor Hogan:

A typical working day ends between 4 and 5pm so why are the council phonelines only open between 9 and 1.30pm?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation:

We are committed to providing accessible services that meet residents' needs.

In 2015/16, around 45% of customer contact was received by telephone. Today, telephone enquiries account for around 20%, with most customers contact us through online forms and email. We have invested in improving these digital services to make access easier and more convenient and meet our customer needs.

Customer feedback highlighted delays in responding to digital enquiries as a key area for improvement. In response, and within the context of ongoing financial pressures and wanting the most effective service, we have aligned resources to reflect how residents now contact us.

Key service telephone lines remain available between 9.30am and 1.30pm. The afternoon period enables staff to process digital enquiries and complete follow-up work arising from telephone conversations. This approach maintains access to telephone support while helping teams respond more effectively across all contact channels.

33. Councillor Hogan:

Could any damage to grass verges (mainly caused by workmen digging them up) be repaired by the council. Some of the damage is very unsightly and potentially dangerous as can be a trip hazard?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

Thank you for your question, Cllr Hogan. I would expect competent contractors working in our public highway or grass verges to undertake a pre-condition assessment including photographs of verges they are working on and ensure restatement restores the grass verge, subject to seasonal planting and watering, to match or improve the condition prior to the works. If details and evidence of damage caused to the public highway or grass verges are provided, then the Council can do repair works and charge the building contractor or utility company.

34. Councillor Fishleigh:

Title: Protecting trees
In December 2022 Full Council agreed a Notice of Motion about protecting trees in the city. It was agreed that "This Council therefore resolves to request: A report to TECC Committee which outlines a. Details on the council's and national planning policy in relation to trees with TPOs that are removed without BHCC's permission and lawful conditions the council can make on applications regarding trees; b. A draft communications plan for residents and developers to support the Council's enforcement approach."
Please would you tell me if these actions took place as I can't find any details. Thank you.

Reply from Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries:

Work started following the Committee report in 2023 to produce a defendable and deliverable policy on TPO enforcement. This did not result in a finished document and has not been revisited in the interim. City Parks Arboriculture have conducted a number of enforcement actions for TPO/CA breeches since the report, one of which resulted in a first prosecution in over 10 years. Work will recommence in finalising a policy document which reflects and details the process which is employed

35. Councillor Fishleigh:

Title: Better Brighton & Hove Fund
Will BHCC honour the costings given in the first consultation which were £10,000 for a bus shelter and, I think, £1,0000 for a bench?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure:

The initial phase consultation for the Better Brighton and Hove Fund included some indicative costs of an assortment of infrastructure items that residents might want to suggest as ideas for their neighbourhood. It was provided to help residents understand the relative costs of different items, both in the context of the sums available in each ward and the lack of knowledge that residents may have about how much these items cost. The purpose of the costing exercise with services is to establish the likely full costs of each item shortlisted so that ward councillors can agree their final project lists. These will need to be within the funding available in each ward and ensure that new items do not result in future burdens on existing revenue budgets.

22 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

22.1 The mayor noted that oral questions had been submitted and that 30 minutes was set aside for the duration of the item. She asked that both the questioner and responder endeavour to keep their questions and answers brief, to enable the questions listed to be taken:

1. Councillor Davis asked:

In a recent FOI response, it came to light that there has been a significant drop in the Council's FOI compliance. The Information Commissioner's Office defined an organisation's compliance with FOI legislation as quote, “unsatisfactory”, unquote, if fewer than 90% of FOI requests fail to meet the 20-day legal deadline. In quarter 1 of this year, this council missed the legal response deadline 53 times. One reason given for the drop in FOI compliance says there is, and I quote again from the report, “nervousness around releasing certain information leading to pressure on the team to agree exemptions”, unquote. Now in the Council Leader’s former role she once said, “without FOI requests, decisions on what to publish will lie with those in power, those with vested interests, in keeping politically embarrassing, contentious or damning information out of public hands.”
Now hopefully you agree that it is wrong for FOI officers to be under pressure by others within the council to agreeing exemptions in the way suggested. And it's worrying that there's a culture of nervousness around releasing certain information. So my question is,

what steps will the administration take to address the resourcing issues within the FOI team?

Councillor Sankey replied:

As you say, I'm a huge proponent of Freedom of Information and I'm proud that in my previous life I was involved in campaigning to maintain our FOI legislation in the interest of transparency and openness. I was not previously aware of the resourcing issues that you have flagged, so I will certainly take that away and look at it and I'll come back to you with an answer.
But just to say, we as a Labour group are very supportive of transparency and openness. That's why we recently commissioned a report into the failings that led us to invest in the i360 under the previous Green Leadership of this Council. I would urge the Green Group, that in the interest of transparency, your Green Chair's Audit Committee, consider that report and ensure that the public have full transparency and openness when it comes to that critical decision.

Councillor Davis asked a supplementary question:

Yeah, not bad, and I hear you about coming back to me. I will remind you that three and half years ago I asked you a question about GMB involvement and the then newly elected Labour administration. I'm still waiting for an answer, so I won't hold my breath. I think the question I really wanted to think about here is if officers or the administration are putting undue pressure on officers low down the chain, that is unacceptable. So, what I'd like to hear about when the Council Leader comes back, and I will ask this question again, is how they're going to address the wellbeing and safeguarding of council officers?

Councillor Sankey replied:

Nothing is more important to me than the wellbeing and the health of council staff. That's why we commissioned, as you know, very early in our administration, a KC report into allegations of mistreatment of staff in our depot and why we acted on all of the 10 recommendations in that report to promote staff wellbeing.
I'm pleased that we'll be bringing forward a notice of motion jointly with Brighton & Hove Independents later on this evening, also recognising the role of our staff in the seafront office and in other roles who have been dealing with a very difficult fallout from some of the tragic incidents that we've seen on the seafront.
The administration is absolutely committed to staff wellbeing in this organisation. As I say, I'm not aware of any undue pressure being put on staff members in the FOI team, but it's something I will certainly look at and make sure that I can satisfy myself that that is not happening. One thing I would say is, it's really clear to me that the way that FOI works is incredibly important from a transparency perspective and ensuring that decision makers are held to account.
It's also incredibly important that there is a safe space for policy making for political administrations. And so it may be on occasion that full disclosure is not possible when FOI requests come in, because that safe space is essential for the good working and the good governance of an organisation and being able to make decisions and to discuss some policy matters with the required privacy that is needed. But I'll absolutely take this away. I will look at the allegations that you're making and ensure that I come back with an update.

2. **Councillor McNair asked:**

What has been happening to our rubbish collections? In Patchman Hollingbury it's been appalling. Rubbish, recycling, garden. For a good month we were being inundated with complaints. It felt like the Greens had taken over again. It was that bad. And it started before the hot weather and there was no information coming out. And the council still insists fortnightly collections will begin.
What needs to change Environmental Services for this fortnightly collections to start?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

Well, apologies to your residents and any other residents around the city who've had less than satisfactory service. You mentioned the heat wave. I just want to sort of reiterate how significant that was and why it's relevant to this conversation. So, and we're actually going to talk about this later in terms of the effects of the changing climate on public services and the wider picture in the city and more broadly. We, to look after our staff who obviously have to do quite manual work, wearing PPE and not the kind of clothes that you would ideally be wearing in such extreme heat. We had to cut basically every single round in the city short for a few days in a row. So that obviously is going to create very significant backlog of missed collections.

That leads me to my next point, which is that the day-to-day service in our refuse and recycling collections is now running better than it used to. The key problem that we have is one of resilience, is what happens when things aren't going to plan. And that's why I spoke about this at length in the recent Cabinet meeting earlier in July about the additional measures we're bringing forward to increase that resilience for when things are going wrong. Now, look, that extreme heat was quite an extreme example and there are other times where things don't go to plan and it has a similar impact, albeit not for as long. But, to your point on fortnightly collections, I just want to be clear with everyone that no decision has yet been made on fortnightly collections, and there are several things that we want to have in place before any decision is made, and one of them is improved reliability of collections and service resolution.

Councillor McNair asked a supplementary question:

The poor service was not just because of the heat. It started well before the heat. If 100% of our rubbish, garden waste, and recycling is not collected every week between now and next May or July, when it's been mentioned the fortnightly rubbish collections will begin, will the idea for fortnightly collections be scrapped?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

I think it's pretty well documented that in our collection services, one of the issues we face most regularly is one of vehicles and the maintenance of those vehicles. You've heard me talk in this chamber and in Cabinet meetings and so on about new vehicles and the need to invest. The problem with new vehicles is that they take a while, right? You order them and they take on average about 18 months to arrive. We've set out investment and made those investments and ordered those new vehicles quite a way back into this administration. It's only really now that they're starting to arrive. So, between now and December, we've got 10 new vehicles entering service. Now that is a very, very significant improvement.

One of the other improvements that we've made is more staff in the workshop, particularly to cover evenings and weekends to make sure that where there are vehicle issues hanging over from the previous week, we can hit the ground running on that Monday morning because those have been addressed.

I'm not going to lay out specific conditions for fortnightly collections. Like I say, no decision has been made, but we're certainly making sure that the service is as resilient as it can be. And look, residents need to have confidence, and this is what I will say with confidence, they need to know that a missed collection on a fortnightly regime will not mean no collection for a whole month, and that is what we'll make sure is in place before we make any decision.

3. **Councillor Fishleigh asked:**

Given the difficulty in recruiting and retaining people to open, close, and clean our public toilets, an increase in wages would surely make the job more attractive. Is this something Council has already considered and if not, would it be a good idea?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

There are various jobs in the Council that are that are difficult to recruit to, and the public toilets we have a sort of solid core full-time team, and we also have a seasonal team, because we have different and extended opening hours in the summer.

The combination of the nature of the work and the seasonal nature of the work does make those seasonal roles in particular difficult to recruit to. We are carrying a small number of vacancies. I think the total team for opening, closing, and cleaning is about 15 and I think we're carrying either 2 or 3 vacancies on that. And if you want me to, I can to come back to you with a firm number.

We are taking steps, in fact, we're onboarding staff at the moment. Actually, I just want to say thank you to you because I know you, along with your ward councillor colleague, have been instrumental in extending the hours at the Ovingdean Undercliff toilets. And actually, we're moving more in that direction. I would love to be able to double the number of staff we have in our public toilets and extend the opening hours both in the morning and in the evening. But as you know, it's a very expensive service to run. Thankfully, we've got some very willing and very well-meaning and very community-minded businesses and partners in the city, yourselves included, obviously. Babble have recently kindly agreed to extend the opening hours of the toilet there and take responsibility for some of the opening up and closing. The latest partner to come onboard is Hove Park Tennis Club, so we're very grateful to them and we're openly seeking partners elsewhere in the city to help us extend those hours because we know how important it is to all of our residents and visitors.

I also just want to say, while we're on the subject of staff, I just want to take the opportunity to thank those staff, because they work long hours, it's not particularly enjoyable work, but you know, I always, whenever I can, take the opportunity to say thank you to them, and I hope that others will too when they see them out in our parks and in the city.

Councillor Fishleigh asked a supplementary question:

I just know that two of the seasonal people left because they basically said it wasn't worth £14.50 an hour. It was quite stressful and difficult, etc. and not very pleasant. So that was where my question was coming from, really. But I guess your answer, maybe you didn't actually answer my question, is no, there's no money and there's different bands and what have you?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

Yeah, apologies, I didn't mean to dodge that question, so thank you for bringing me back to it. We have discussed the pay issue. Obviously, staff across the Council, there are pay bands and everything, and there are mechanisms for where you have particular problems with recruitment around being able to offer a market supplement. We have had that conversation, whether or not that can be justified. It's quite a high bar to justify that. You have to demonstrate very significant problems with recruitment over a long period of time. It may well be that's something we choose to look at, but it's not something that we've done for the moment, but we clearly need to make sure that we've got the team fully staffed, particularly in the summer. So, we'll factor that in our thinking for next year. Thank you.

4. **Councillor Hill asked:**

With the support of the Equalities Minister, the EHRC's updated code of practice will come into effect on 5th August. This new code replaces the previous guidance and will be statutory in nature. Despite widespread cross-party backlash, including comments from the Council Leader, the government has pushed ahead on making it statutory without a vote on this. This guidance appears to conflict with the public sector equality duty and other equalities legislation and so seems unworkable to me. How does the Council seek to navigate this uncertainty whilst upholding the dignity of trans people which the guidance undermines?

Councillor Alexander replied:

I do recognise that the recent judgement has had an awful negative effect on our trans and non-binary communities and also on people who have a non-gender conforming appearance. We remain as a trans inclusive employer and will continue to remain a trans inclusive council, whilst also ensuring compliance with the law. The Council is meeting regularly with reps from the trans and non-binary communities throughout TNBI roundtable group so that we can better understand the sense of feelings, the concerns and what we can do to help mitigate some of the harms felt by the trans and non-binary communities currently. We also do believe that the guidance is flawed and confusing, and we will be pressing the government to legislate to ensure the dignity of trans people is protected.

Councillor Hill asked a supplementary question:

So, in response, I think the difficulty is that partly that compliance with the law is hard when different parts of the law say different things. So, what would you say to transgender people like myself who feel that this government treats us as a disease unwelcome in society? Why should we trust a government who endorses guidance that treats us as sexual predators simply for existing as who we are?

Councillor Alexander replied:

To be honest, I don't really know how to answer you, except that I'm really sorry and I'm trying to understand your pain and the pain is felt by trans and non-binary people at the moment and it's really understandable that there is the pain felt.
But believe me, we are working towards a solution. And as you say, it is really hard. The guidance is confusing and we are trying to navigate it currently. There's a team in the council working on it at the moment.
And we do and we will remain a trans inclusive council. And I'm sorry I can't better answer you at the moment, but hopefully I can stand here in a couple of months time and be able to answer more clearly.

5. **Councillor Meadows asked:**

The War Memorial at Doric Temple in Patcham Peace Gardens is designated as a centenary fields, but it is in a very poor state. We thank the U3A for all their work in looking after the gardens. On officers of been out to examine the war memorial, but no action has yet been taken to safeguard it. It has weeds grown out of the roof and we're concerned about its overall structure. The crazy paving has also been left in a state of disrepair for many years. Can this memorial be restored please?

Councillor McGregor replied:

I'll be very honest, I don't know why this has come to me. But yes, we will look into it and I will get back to you some time with a plan for how we can restore it in the heritage of the site. I'm assuming that's where it's come to me for the heritage site. So, yes, I agree.

Councillor Meadows asked a supplementary question:

Just to say, as the Council has an Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award, do you feel it is important that this historical war memorial and gardens are valued and restored to former glory as other historic monuments in the city?

Councillor McGregor replied:

So yes, 100% and I think to give you some sort of trust in the Council is what we've done around Valley Gardens, the Battle of Boar’s Head that is so different and it looks amazing and it's so much more fitting for the occasions that we're having in the Council. And I know from the work that Councillor Grimshaw is doing as well, as our Armed Forces Lead, that we are so keen to make sure that the spaces that we have for these special events are up to scratch.

6. **Councillor Earthey asked:**

My question concerns a new compensation mechanism for missed recycled collections. Previously, subscriptions were extended, but this is no longer possible because of the move to a fixed April invoicing date. This lack of clarity of the right to compensation has caused a lot of anger and confusion amongst residents, especially those suffering missed regular collections. So, my question is, please can you explain the new mechanism involving adjusting subscription payments that compensate for missed collections, which includes the

criteria for making a claim, the process of making a claim, the need for any supporting evidence, when this new mechanism will come into existence, and how will residents be informed of their right to claim?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

I fully appreciate and recognise the frustration that, well, obviously the frustration from the missed garden waste collections, but the lack of clarity on how that is reflected in the arrangement.

So, for the benefit of those not opposed to it, what used to happen is that if there were missed collections, people's subscriptions would be extended by a period of time, but the services moved to a fixed sort of subscription period that models the financial year, which means extending it then gets very messy very quickly.

I can confirm that what is happening is that missed collections will be compensated for in the reform of refunds after each missed collection. I met with the team about it this morning and letters will be going out to every garden waste subscriber to make it really clear what exactly the process is.

Councillor Earthey asked a supplementary question:

I think in this day and age, really, when we have customer-centric integrated CRM and billing systems to go back to a kind of fixed term, fixed start date, is going back 20 years anyway, that's your choice. But, my question is, it really is vital that you tell people what they're rights are. So, when is that going to happen? When is it going to letter? Next week? Next month? Because they really are very angry.

Councillor Rowkins replied:

I appreciate it. It will be imminent. I can't say if it will be this week or next week, but we've basically worked out that that is the mechanism because there was a brief discussion about whether it would be immediate refunds or adjustments to future payments, whether there's a bit of stuff to work through. But it will be going out fairly shortly. I do think the confusion has come a little bit because the change to the way the subscription mechanisms were made, but the standard previously existing terms and conditions were sent out to everybody, which obviously didn't reflect the fact that that changed. So, I appreciate that's why that's caused a bunch of confusion, but hopefully that will all be clarified. If you want to put any residents in touch, then please feel free to do so. But like I said, I would expect by this time, hopefully next week, the letters will be drafted and going out. So yeah, fingers crossed.

7. **Councillor Atkinson asked:**

I was pleased to read the recent report on antisocial behaviour in social housing and I look forward to seeing the recommendations from the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and those issues being put into action.
My question though starts at the very beginning of the housing process and relates to how people are placed in council accommodation in the first place when it's known that they have issues with alcohol or drug abuse or have exhibited anti-social behaviour in the past. I

have numerous cases in North Portslade where elderly residents, sometimes in their 80s, suddenly find they have a new neighbour who quickly makes their life a misery. I have one whose neighbour's dogs bark all night, another whose neighbour uses cannabis which seeps through the walls of their flats, one who has been sworn at regularly when all she's trying to do is ask her neighbour not to be so loud, and another whose neighbour comes home at 3 o'clock in the morning under the influence of drugs and proceeds to throw furniture around his flat.
So, my question is, does any sort of screening or risk assessment take place in terms of neighbouring residents before a person with known behaviour issues is placed in council accommodation?

Councillor Williams replied:

It is an important concern. We do understand why residents are concerned about the allocation of council housing, where there might be some known issues there. Antisocial behaviour, we all know, can have a really serious effect on neighbours and the quality of life, and residents ought to feel safe and secure in their own homes. We all agree with that. But the council needs to balance two responsibilities here. We have a duty to allocate social housing for those in need. But we also need to make those decisions responsibly and consider any known risk and you're right, that is what happens. The council's housing allocation policy does allow us to consider previous behaviour. This can include a history of antisocial behaviour, tenancy breaches, relevant criminal behaviour, or whether someone might be unlikely to manage a tenancy unsuccessfully. In some cases, this can mean a person doesn't qualify for social housing for those reasons. They may qualify for supportive housing in some other way, but not as a council tenant as such, or may need further assessment before any offer is made. So that does happen and we do that with every prospective council tenant. There are also circumstances where a property can be treated as a sensitive net and this is used in exceptional cases where there are clear housing management reasons to take extra care. For particularly a community that has been traumatised by antisocial behaviour, for example, and we need to take extra care when a property is being left there or offered.
But decisions must be made on evidence. We need the evidence. They must be proportionate in law, or we can be challenged in law, and relate to the specific risk being managed. I know some residents who raised it at a housing panel, and I'm always sorry to hear about this. And we do recognise the strength of feeling in communities, it can be very disruptive, and we are taking forward the work with residents to look at ASB, to look at allocations, including how those decisions are made, how they are explained, and where the process can be improved.

8. **Councillor Wilkinson asked:**

Clean, well-maintained streets, and public spaces contribute to civic pride, accessibility, support local businesses, and improve accessibility for everyone.

The Council has introduced a number of initiatives to improve street cleansing and public realm maintenance. Can the Cabinet Member for Environment outline what further action is planned over the coming months to improve street appearances across Brighton and Hove, including street cleansing, weed management, and ensure that all neighbourhoods benefit from these agreements?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

The condition and look and feel of our streets is absolutely fundamental to civic pride, and it's what people rightly expect councils to do. There's a range of things that we've that we have done, are doing, and will be doing in the future. We've obviously fairly recently launched the overnight street cleansing service. Now, I would say that's albeit been on a fairly limited footprint so far. I visited the area around Churchill Square in the day or two after they visited, and the whole place was really quite substantially brighter and much improved. We're obviously reviewing that service in terms of what it's doing, where it's doing it, and how it's doing it and all of that. I think, to be honest, if the Council's financial position improves in the coming years and I was asked for suggestions on what to spend more on, I think the street cleansing service would probably be at the top or very near the top of my suggestion. So I would certainly like to be able to expand that in the future.

The weed management programme has started this year. I appreciate, I think one of the changes we made this year is that instead of having one team working across the city from one side to the other, these two teams working from the outside and working in, but obviously those areas closer to the city centre, like the western edge of Kemptown, for example, I appreciate that's meant that you saw been a little bit late in the line on that.

We're doing a lot of work on fly tipping at the moment. We recently, earlier in the year, cut the bulky waste collection charge from starting at £60 for a single item to £25 for a single item. That's obviously a very significant cut and I'm pleased to say we've had a real spike in items being collected. It's worth mentioning that about half of all fly tips are single items. So, if you can get those picked up for 25 quid, then that's obviously a bit of a win. And we're working on further plans on fly tipping fairly shortly.

Lots of work going on graffiti, we've got some new equipment just landed, the laser jet machines that's going to enable us to remove more graffiti and do it quicker because you don't need a team of two to remove tags, you only need one. We should be able to do twice as many and that combined with the additional vehicles we put in will have an impact. So, there's lots going on.

We've talked a fair bit of length about the digital system in collections and the fact that collection service used to run on scraps of paper and the difficulties that led to. We're also now looking at bringing in a digital system for the street cleansing service to be able to get people to respond in a much more agile way to reports and enable those operatives to report things in. We're always looking for ways to improve the street cleansing service, so I hope that your residents in Kemptown will start seeing even more improvements soon.

Councillor Wilkinson asked a supplementary question:

Thank you, Councillor Rowkins, and I welcome all those productive and great initiatives that are in place. Kemptown Ward is one of the city's busiest visitor destinations, and I hear from residents right across the ward about persistent weed growth and the overall appearance of our streets. Could you confirm when the programme is expected to reach Kemptown, whether residents can request that particular streets are considered, where there are significant concerns, and when the enhanced city centre st cleansing and overnight cleansing programme will be extended to St James Street and the surrounding area?

And in addition, will you also work with us as ward councillors to ensure that local priorities are reflected in their programmes?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

The weed programme has, I think, now reached Kemptown. I think it's actually happening this week, so you'll start to see the effects of that fairly soon. The overnight street service initially covers the area that we allocated to the newly appointed city centre manager, which we launched last year. That includes St James Street, Kemptown, and that kind of surrounding area. So that area will definitely be done. I haven't got dates for you, but I can certainly liaise with officers and try and come back, because obviously, it's only been up and running for a few weeks, that service. We're still working out how quickly it moves. My view with that service is that I would like to get us to a point where we can deploy it to all parts of the city that need it, but obviously the city centre pressures, including St James Street are very significant because of the amount of footfall that we get and the impact that that has.

Just to remind everyone that anybody, councillors, or residents, businesses can request a clean up from the street cleaning service and that is a service that works. You stick it in the website and they will turn up and do what's been asked of. And again, I suppose I just wanted to take the opportunity to say thanks to all our staff. We often hear about what isn't going right or what we want more of, but I think given we have 11 million visitors to the city each year, our streets cleansing service do an amazing job of clearing all that stuff off the beach and everything. So I just want to say thank you to them.

23 COLDEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - DECISION NOTICE

23.1 Councillor Sheard introduced and formally moved the report.

23.2 Councillor Hill, Meadows and Fishleigh spoke on the matter.

23.3 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote which was carried.

23.4 RESOLVED:

That Council agrees to:

1) Determine that the Coldean Neighbourhood Plan be modified according to the recommendations in the independent examiner’s report and as set out in the attached Decision Statement (Appendix 1) and that the Decision Statement be published.
2) Approve the examiner’s recommendation that the Neighbourhood Plan now proceed to a local referendum. The referendum area is the Coldean Neighbourhood Area.
3) In the event that more than 50% of residents vote to support the Neighbourhood Plan in the local referendum, the Council formally ‘makes’ the Coldean Neighbourhood Plan.

24 APPOINTMENT OF TWO NEW INDEPENDENT PERSONS

24.1 RESOLVED

1) That Council approve the appointments of Mr Dean Spears and Mr Paul Cummins as two of the Council's three Independent Persons; and

2) That Council agree that each of the above appointments shall be for an initial period of 4 years (subject to review after the first 6 month period), further giving the Monitoring Officer delegated authority to implement a 2-year extension thereafter at her discretion after consulting with the Chair of Audit, Standards & General Purposes Committee; and

3) That the appointment of both of the Independent Persons come into immediate effect, on the date of the decision of full Council.

25 REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE 2026/27

25.1 Councillor Hewitt introduced and formally moved the report.

25.2 Councillor Hill spoke on the matter.

25.3 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote which was carried.

25.4 RESOLVED:

1) That Council appoints its committees with the sizes and allocation of seats between political groups as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

2) That Councillor Nadia Barton Ahmad be appointed to the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3) That Council appoints three Members to the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority Audit & Governance Committee and three Members to the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee as set out at Appendix 2

4) That Council notes the in-year changes to appointments following consultation with the Leader, made under delegated powers as set out at Appendix 2.

26 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

26.1 Councillor Mackey introduced and formally moved the report.

26.2 Councillor Sykes and McNair spoke on the matter.

26.3 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote which was carried.

26.4 RESOLVED:

1) That Council formally approves the changes to the Constitution relating to the deadlines for public questions for Full Council set out in the report and in Appendix 1, with immediate effect.

2) That Council authorises the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary or incidental to the implementation of the above changes, and that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend such parts of the Council's constitutional documents as they consider necessary or incidental to incorporate the changes, and to republish the Constitution.

27 YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2026-29

27.1 Councillor Sheard introduced and formally moved the report.

27.2 Councillor Shanks, Hill, Hogan and Grimshaw spoke on the matter.

27.3 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote which was carried.

27.4 RESOLVED:

1) Full Council noted and endorsed the city's Youth Justice Plan and supports the activity detailed therein.

28 SAVE OUR BUSES

28.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor McNair on behalf of the Conservative Group and formally seconded by Councillor Meadows.

28.2 Councillors De Oliveira, Atkinson, Goddard, Czolak and Davis spoke on the matter

28.3 Councillor McNair responded to the debate.

28.4 The mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been lost.

RESOLVED:

1) That the motion had been lost.

29 EXTREME HEAT

29.1 The joint Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Hill on behalf of the Green Group and Brighton and Hove Independent Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Earthey.

29.2 Councillors Lademacher, Hogan, Theobald, Earthey, Rowkins and Guilmant spoke on the matter.

29.3 Councillor Hill responded to the debate.

29.4 The mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been lost.

RESOLVED:

1) That the motion had been lost.

30 RESISTING HOSTILE IMMIGRATION POLICIES

30.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Barton Ahmad on behalf of the Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Goldsmith.

30.2 Councillor Sankey moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Asaduzzaman.

30.3 Councillors McNair and Earthey spoke on the matter

30.4 Councillor Barton Ahmad responded to the debate and did not accept the amendment.

30.5 The mayor congratulated Cllr Nadia Barton Ahmad on their maiden speech.

30.6 The mayor put the amendment to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

30.7 The mayor put the motion as amended to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

1. The current government's action to resist the hostile policies of the previous Government including scrapping the Rwanda deportation scheme and starting to process asylum cases again.

    1. The hostile environment reached its peak in Brighton and Hove when 137 unaccompanied asylum seeking children went missing from a hotel in Hove between 2021 and 2022

    2. The recent counter-protests, which demonstrate that the vast majority of our city reject the far-right hate that drives these hostile immigration policies.

    3. Brighton and Hove's longstanding status as a City of Sanctuary, recently recognised by the Council of Sanctuary award.

This Council resolves to:

1. Officially endorse the Leader's recent letter to the Home Secretary calling for an extension to the move on period; granting asylum seekers the right to work after six months; the commencement of local authority led accommodation pilots and restore the right to family reunion.

This Council further notes:

a. The council's legal obligations relate to regulatory, safeguarding and public protection responsibilities, such as consumer protection, public safety, health and safety, licensing compliance, modern slavery, labour exploitation and safeguarding concerns and do not extend to immigration enforcement;
b. There are no data-sharing or service agreements with the Home Office in place concerning immigration enforcement
c. Continues partnership working with organisations like Voices in Exile to support migrants and businesses to ensure they are aware of their legal rights.

31 NET ZERO & CLIMATE ADAPTATION IN BRIGHTON & HOVE

31.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Rowkins on behalf of the Labour Group and formally seconded by Councillor Winder.

31.2 Councillor Hill moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Sykes.

31.3 Councillors Meadows and Earthey spoke on the matter

31.4 Councillor Rowkins responded to the debate and did not accept the amendment.

31.5 The mayor put the amendment to the vote and confirmed that it had been lost.

31.6 The mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

1) The work undertaken to accelerate the city's progress to Net Zero, including large scale rooftop solar generation, nation-leading EV charging, the development of a Strategic Energy Partnership to fund and deliver the decarbonisation project pipeline.
2) That city's leadership in the establishment of Sussex Energy to achieve zero carbon energy for the whole of Sussex by 2040 and the importance of this work continuing.
3) That the UK recently recorded its hottest June day on record, with temperatures reaching 37.3°C, and that heatwaves are becoming more frequent, longer-lasting and more intense as a result of climate change
4) That climate change is already affecting residents in Brighton & Hove through overheating, pressure on health and care services, disruption to transport and public services, impacts on schools and workplaces, and increased risks to vulnerable people.
5) The work done to date on climate adaptation, including the Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment and the Climate and Nature Action Plan.

This Council resolves to:

1) Request officers to explore creating and maintaining a publicly accessible "Cool Spaces" map, identifying libraries, community hubs, parks, public buildings and other locations where residents can find respite during periods of extreme heat;
2) Requests officers to review actions from the Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment and Climate & Nature Action Plan and consider whether a standalone action plan focused on increasing resilience to heat is required;
3) Request officers to explore the establishment of a Heatwave Partnership, bringing together the council, NHS, universities, schools, housing providers, emergency services, community groups and businesses to coordinate preparedness and response.

32 SEAFRONT SAFETY & INVESTMENT

32.1 The joint Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Grimshaw on behalf of the Labour Group Brighton and Hove Independent Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Earthey.

32.2 Councillors Pickett, Hill and Lyons spoke on the matter

32.3 Councillor Grimshaw responded to the debate.

32.4 The mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

1) That Brighton and Hove is known for its vibrant, award-winning beaches and attracts millions of visitors each year
2) Our beaches often appear on the list of best beaches in Sussex and the South-east
3) Seafront safety is of paramount importance to residents and visitors alike
4) There have been a number of tragic incidents and near misses along the coastline this year which are still subject to investigation
5) The Blue Flag status requires the highest degree of safety standards
6) The shameful criticism directed at the RNLI and other marine emergency services carrying out their duty to protect life at sea irrespective of the circumstance.
7) The return of the seafront patrol boat
8) The review of seafront safety which has already resulted in improved CCTV and lighting

This Council resolves to:

1) Reaffirm the Council's commitment to working in partnership with RNLI to promote seafront safety and support its lifesaving work protecting people along our coastline out without fear or favor.

2) Thank the excellent seafront team and other colleagues who have performed professionally and with compassion under difficult circumstances.,
3) Welcome the further investment in our iconic seafront as set out in the Seafront Development Prospectus and as recently announced by the Department for Transport to protect our seafront arches and support independent businesses.
4) Reaffirm the Council's commitment to maintaining Blue Flag status for all beaches that are so accredited.

33 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting concluded at 7.53pm

Signed Chair

Dated this day of 2026