



**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMISSION  
ADDENDUM**

**3.30PM, TUESDAY, 26 JANUARY 2010**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**



## **ADDENDUM**

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**DRAFT EXTRACT FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE GOVERNANCE  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 14 JANUARY 2010**

**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**4.00PM 14 JANUARY 2010**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Oxley (Chairman), Simpson (Deputy Chairman), Brown, Elgood, Fallon-Khan, Mears, Mitchell, Randall, Simson and Taylor

**64 GOOD GOVERNANCE REVIEW – REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMISSION**

64.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning findings of the Audit Commission's review of Good Governance in Brighton & Hove and proposed actions in response to the recommendations. (for copy see minute book).

64.2 The Chairman explained the Audit Commission's report had been considered by the Audit Committee in December. He welcomed Simon Mathers, Audit Manager from the Audit Commission, to the meeting.

64.3 Councillor Elgood expressed concern about the length of time it had taken for the Good Governance report to be made available to Members; the information that went into the report was gathered at a time when the Council's new constitution was at a different stage and significant progress had been made since then.

He was disappointed that the comments in relation to whistle blowing had not been made available for the discussion on the issue that took place at the last meeting of the Committee as they would have made for a more valuable discussion.

He stated that the report contained positive and negative comments, which was to be expected; however, one of the biggest concerns was the indication of disenfranchisement from both the public and opposition councillors, which supported the view that the Cabinet system was not the best option for the city.

He agreed that the action plan would move the Council forward and added that progress would need to be closely monitored with significant Member involvement.

64.4 The Chairman stated that the comments within the report in relation to whistle blowing did not undermine the work undertaken at the previous Committee meeting and that a further report would be considered in March. He added

that the Members and officers were working together to seek a way forward that staff could have confidence in.

64.5 Councillor Mitchell echoed Councillor Elgood's comments in relation to the delay in the report being released, particularly since the Council's priorities moving forward had already been reported to the Committee. She was disappointed that, as Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission (OSC), the comments in relation to scrutiny processes had not been shared with her earlier. She added that she agreed with the comments that senior councillors had become too involved in the day to day running of the Council and felt that this was due to a blurring of the boundaries between officers and senior councillors.

64.6 The Head of Law explained that the Good Governance report had not been seen by the Leader of the Council or the Chairman until the final version was published; the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Audit Committee, in addition to Councillor Elgood had been the first to see the report. He confirmed that there had been no Member involvement in the Council's response to the first draft of the report and that the queries made were largely in relation to background and factual information. He advised that there had been some logistical problems with the survey that informed the report and that overlapping of annual leave between Council and Audit Commission officers had resulted in a further delay. He added that the District Auditor, Helen Thompson, had apologised for the undue delay and that officers had also learnt from the process.

He advised that the findings in the report should be looked at in context; at the time when the information was gathered the executive system had only been in place for three months so relationships were still being shaped. The role of a Cabinet Member was very different from that of a committee chairman; heavier involvement was to be expected due to their direct decision-making power. In addition, the Administration was still relatively new and all of these circumstances had led to some ambiguity. While working arrangements had improved, the Council acknowledged and recognised the concerns raised and this was reflected in the action plan.

He added that he accepted that there should be Member involvement in taking the action plan forward.

64.7 The Audit Manager confirmed the reasons for the delay and accepted that the report would have been more valuable if released earlier. He added that the Audit Commission was satisfied that the changes requested were mostly factual and that the final report remained largely unchanged from the first draft.

64.8 The Chairman requested that the Committee receive a report in July updating them on the progress made against the action plan.

64.9 Councillor Brown highlighted errors within the Good Governance report that referred Falmer Academy as a PFI project, which was incorrect. She also contended that the number of teenage pregnancies should not have been used as an example of underperformance; this was a top priority for both the Council and the Primary Care Trust and contrary to the statement within the

report, there had actually been a steady decline in the number of teenage pregnancies.

- 64.10 Councillor Randall shared the views of Councillors Elgood and Mitchell and advised that it was important for the recommendations to be implemented transparently. He moved an amendment requesting that the Good Governance report be referred on to full Council and OSC for further debate.
- 64.11 Councillor Elgood formally seconded the amendment.
- 64.12 Councillor Mears emphasised the need to consider the report in context and questioned the benefit of a further debate given that all councillors had been given the opportunity to submit their views. She stated that, despite the challenging circumstances, progress had already been made and it would not be helpful to continue looking backwards.
- 64.13 The Head of Law confirmed that the amendment was lawful, but reminded Members that a further report on progress would come to the Committee, allowing them to retain ownership of some actions while others would be considered by the Standards Committee. He explained that, in terms of accountability, it was not advisable to debate the report at Council.
- 64.14 Councillor Taylor stated that the recommendations from the Audit Committee were sensible, but that Members had not been given an adequate chance to respond. He added that the report included no reference to Member involvement in responding to the issues raised by the Audit Commission.
- 64.15 Councillor Mitchell stated that the Good Governance report was a critique of the culture of the council rather than its model of governance. She added that the Council needed to begin delivering the policies that had been prompted by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) report and staff survey, such as the Dignity at Work policy, in order to address the issues raised in the report.
- 64.16 The Audit Manager confirmed that criticisms were not being made of the Council's new structure; it was reasonable for there to be a bedding in period and a need for refinement. The Audit Commission would consider progress made as part of the Use of Resources judgement. He also confirmed that the Audit Commission would welcome the opportunity to report back to the Committee in July.
- 64.17 Councillor Mears advised that Members would be able to utilise the Leaders' Group meetings to highlight any further constitutional concerns.
- 64.18 Councillor Elgood commented that he could see no harm in the report being debated by the full Council and that it was critical for the report to go to OSC. He stated that the full Council would be able to take ownership of the action plan if they were to debate it.
- 64.19 Councillor Randall added that it was important for the Council's workforce to see all Members taking the issues forward.
- 64.20 The Chairman put the Green amendment to the vote, which was lost.

64.21 **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the report of the Audit Commission be noted.
- (2) That the proposed action in response to the recommendations of the Commission as set out in the action plan listed as Appendix 1 to the Commission's report be noted.

Note: Councillor Elgood wished his name recorded as having voted against the recommendations.

Councillors Mitchell, Randall, Simpson and Taylor wished their names recorded as having abstained from the vote.



# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

26 January 2010

## Agenda Item 70

Brighton & Hove City Council

**Subject:** Scrutiny of Budget Strategies  
**Date of Meeting:** 26 January 2010  
**Report of:** Director of Strategy and Governance  
**Contact Officer:** Name: Tom Hook Tel: 29-1110  
E-mail: Tom.hook@brighton-hove.gov.uk  
**Wards Affected:** All

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Note: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Council Procedure Rule 7, Access to Information Rule 5 and Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act as amended (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) was the information contained within the report was not available in time to meet dispatch deadlines.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

1.1 As part of the budget scrutiny process five committee meetings were held at which directorate budget strategies were reviewed. This report presents to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC) the draft minutes from these meetings and provides an opportunity for members to comment upon the budget proposals and the scrutiny process itself.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

- a) Notes the draft minutes from each of the budget scrutiny meetings
- b) Provides further comments on the budget proposals to Cabinet
- c) Reflects and comments on the budget scrutiny process

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 At its meeting of September 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Commission agreed new arrangements for the scrutiny of budget proposals. This involved consideration of the draft budget strategy of each directorate by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.2 Minutes from each Committee are attached to this report as appendices 1-4.

- Appendix 1 – Draft Minutes from the CTEOSC budget scrutiny meeting
- Appendix 2 – Draft Minutes from the CYPOSC budget scrutiny meeting
- Appendix 3 – Draft Minutes from the ECSOSC budget scrutiny meeting
- Appendix 4 – Draft Minutes from the ASCHOSC budget scrutiny meeting

3.3 OSC has the opportunity to agree a response to the budget strategies to be presented to Cabinet on February 11<sup>th</sup>.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 There has been no formal consultation in relation to this report.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

##### Legal Implications:

5.2 Scrutinising Executive decisions on finance matters, including those relating to annual budget, is one of the main functions of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.

##### Equalities Implications:

5.4 Equality impact assessments have been undertaken on budget proposals. Members will want to take this into account when commenting upon budget proposals.

##### Sustainability Implications:

5.5 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report. However in scrutinising the budget proposals members will want to be mindful of the sustainability issues.

##### Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.9 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. However in scrutinising the budget proposals members will want to be mindful of the crime and disorder issues.

##### Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

5.10 Risk management is considered as part of the budget setting process. Information on risk management is available as part of the budget proposals.

##### Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.11 The budget agreed will impact across the whole of the Council and the City.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Appendix 1 – Draft Minutes from the CTEOSC budget scrutiny meeting  
Appendix 2 – Draft Minutes from the CYPOSC budget scrutiny meeting  
Appendix 3 – Draft Minutes from the ECSOSC budget scrutiny meeting  
Appendix 4 – Draft Minutes from the ASCHOSC budget scrutiny meeting

#### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

#### **Background Documents**

1. Directorate Budget Strategies.

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**CULTURE, TOURISM & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**2.00PM 14 DECEMBER 2009**

**COMMITTEE ROOM 3, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Randall (Chairman); Davis, Drake (Deputy Chairman) and Hawkes

**Co-opted Members:**

**PART ONE**

**44. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**44a. Substitutes**

Mo Marsh for Craig Turton  
Keith Taylor for Amy Kennedy

Apologies from Averil Older  
Apologies from Carol Theobald

**44.b Declaration of interests**

Mo Marsh declared that she was a member of the Brighton Dome Board.

**44.c Exclusion of press and public**

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if member of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I(1) of the said Act.

**44.c Resolved** – *That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.*

**45. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

45.1 The Chairman said it was the first time that CTEOSC had considered the budget prior to Council. The Committee's comments would be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for its budget meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2010 and then on to 11th February Cabinet.

45.2 He explained that Ian Shurrock was here from the Environment Directorate as sports and leisure fell under the remit of CTEOSC. Also present were both the Cabinet Members for this area, Councillor David Smith and Councillor Ted Kemble, who would make short presentations on the budget and their areas of responsibility.

#### **46. BUDGET UPDATE & DIRECTORATE BUDGET STRATEGIES FOR 2010/11**

- 46.1 Cllr David Smith began by emphasising that the Culture & Enterprise Directorate was one of the best known and positively regarded in the city. However, it was facing cash limits. It was responding to this by focussing on customer care and improving its ICT. The Directorate wanted to concentrate on its core activities and increase value for money, for example by increasing sponsorship. It was also looking at innovative ways of delivering services such as transforming community libraries into hubs.
- 46.2 The service was hoping to achieve a 6% level of savings which represented £722,000. This would be achieved by increasing efficiency to save £495,000 and increasing income by £227,000. They would then reinvest £236,000 into the services, with £190,000 for the Pavilion and museums services and £46,000 into the library service.
- 46.3 The Directorate faced a number of service pressures including a £360,000 shortfall because of the downturn in the economy. In addition they had service pressures in the area of Supported Employment because of the grant funding from the Department for Work and Pensions coming to an end. A one off corporate allocation from reserves of £180,000 had been provisionally allocated to fund a transitional period from the end of the grant funding.
- 46.4 Tourism & Venues had already undertaken a review of their back office in order to save £68,000 and there would be reductions in the costs of senior management and administrative staff. Other reductions would be found from introducing timed tours at Preston Manor and reducing the opening hours of the Booth Museum (Thursday to Saturday, from 10am to 5pm and Sunday 2-5pm), alongside opening for pre-booked times. The Brighton History Centre services would be moved to the Jubilee Library, in anticipation of the development of The Keep. This relocation to Jubilee Library would enable access to limited local and family history resources across seven days a week. The re-location of the Centre would also free up exhibition space, which could be used to house exhibits from the Booth Museum.
- 46.5 Cllr Ted Kemble then told the Committee that his service areas were seeking to make the following savings:
- Reducing the contribution to the Brussels office to £4,000, making £2,000 savings
  - Fund the Business Forum with external funds and make a core budget saving of £40,000
  - Taking advantage of the low Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation on the Dome contract to generate savings of £25,000
  - Streamline the Major Projects Team to save £70,000
  - Reducing supplies and services budgets by £30,000
- 46.6 Scott Marshall, Director of Culture & Enterprise told the Committee that firstly, for staffing in the current year they were holding posts which had become vacant, in order

to offset against the current overspend. Then the proposals for 2010/11 would affect 22 posts, of which 6 were vacancies and there were 12.38 (full-time equivalent) posts which would be deleted.

- 46.7 When asked how the deletion of these posts would be managed, Mr Marshall explained that, in line with council policy, on the 10<sup>th</sup> December they had issued two staff consultation documents. The first outlined the general pressures facing the Directorate. The second document contained detailed implications for each team and a timetable for consultation. Copies of these consultation documents were issued to the Unions at a Departmental Consultative Group meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009.
- 46.8 The results of the consultation will be presented to staff on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2010. It was then confirmed that all staff were aware of the proposed changes, with the exception of staff who had been unwell and not at work in the last week. The Committee heard that the Directorate would do all it could to minimise the number of potential redundancies.
- 46.9 Sally McMahon, Head of Libraries and Information Services clarified what would be the process of transferring the Brighton History Centre services (managed through Museums and Libraries) to Jubilee Library and then to 'The Keep'. The Centre was jointly funded from both the Museum and Libraries budgets. The service was already looking forward to the move which would see all the archived material transferred to 'The Keep'. They wanted to preserve a limited level of access to local and family history resources in the city centre and the Library was the logical place. The main resources to be transferred to Jubilee Library would include online resources, microfiche and microfilm resources, and some of the book stock and heavily used archive materials. Storage there would be possible in spaces such as the rare books room. Access to the bulk of the archive would still be possible by ordering items in advance.
- 46.10 Mr Marshall explained that on the income side they had identified £190,000 in recognition of the tough financial climate and the need to offset reduced financial income. Janita Bagshawe, the Head of Royal Pavilion & Museums said that they had explored other income generation areas, including the selling of expertise. The intention was to generate £20,000 e.g. through the Security & Fire Manager. However, opportunities were limited in most areas and would provide little return. The service was lucky to have the Royal Pavilion as an attraction, as it allowed for the generation of so much more income than other local authorities could rely on. However, the targets were very high and the achievement of these had been very difficult over the last two to three years. To achieve the targets, service improvements had taken place including a new ticketing system, which would allow for on-line booking in the New Year and also a contact centre, which had led to a reduction in the percentage of calls.
- 46.11 Ms Bagshawe felt that the service had explored all the key areas for income generation, and it was generally agreed that the focus needed to be on:
- Admission price
  - Function hire
  - Catering
  - Retail

Ms Bagshawe also pointed out that sponsorship and funding through Trusts and Grant giving bodies had become harder to find. Therefore, the Royal Pavilion & Museums was looking to secure funding through individual giving. This would lead to a mixed economy for the budget, comprised of:

- Local authority
- Earned income
- Individual giving

Already, nearly 60% of the budget was earned income, which compared very well to other local authorities. Anne Silley, Head of Financial Services, explained that when setting corporate fees and charging systems they were trying to be as innovative as possible. The Committee felt that they would like to receive a paper in the New Year on the future direction of funding.

46.12 The Committee asked for confirmation of the proposed reduced opening hours for the Booth Museum and the proposals to move items to either the History Centre or other museums. It was an educationally important site that could benefit from a holistic approach rather than piecemeal one. Although the future of the museum had already been looked at before, it was felt to be such a gem and deserved to be the subject of a Scrutiny.

46.13 Mr Marshall said that since 1990 the number of visitors had dropped by 10,000 from c35,000 in 1990 to c25,000 in 2009. He confirmed that the average daily visits (non-school) were as follows:

- Monday – 52
- Tuesday - 42.7
- Wednesday – 39.6
- Friday – 55.6
- Saturday – 96
- Sunday - 46

46.14 Therefore the intention was to maximize the peak days for visiting.

46.15 Ms Bagshawe told the Committee that this issue was in the Museums Strategic Forward Plan and they would be starting a collections review of Natural History in January 2010. The museum housed very significant collections and it was important to look at the, educational use and best places for display.

46.16 Ms Bagshawe explained that there had already been three previous plans to develop the Booth Museum. In the 1980s, the Council explored the possibility of extending the Booth through the purchase of the adjacent house. The cost of this redevelopment would have been £3.5m. In the 1990s a plan to reconfigure the Booth was aborted as it became Listed and the significant alterations would not have got List Building Consent. Funding was then secured in 2000 for a feasibility study. The study concluded that the stored collections were moved out of the Booth, leaving the Booth for display only. The capital costs for this project were £2.5m and there would have been additional revenue costs for the displaced Booth collections. Only 1% of Booth collections are displayed.

- 46.17 The service planned to re-explore the collections by different themes and could potentially secure funding to pilot this as some funding had recently been announced for Designated Collections. Expressions of interest in the funding had to be submitted by the end of December 2009.
- 46.18 The Committee felt that it would be useful to have a scrutiny into the Museum, for example looking at issues such as its Natural History Collection, next year.
- 46.19 Paula Murray, Head of Culture & Economy then confirmed to the Committee that the funding was in place for the Business Forum next year.
- 46.20 The Committee asked for more detail on the proposed improvements to the modernisation of Jubilee Library services. Ms McMahon said that while it was yet to be decided, they were currently looking at the business case for buying e-books and downloadable music and audio books.
- 46.21 The Committee enquired what would happen to Castleham Supported Employment Service in one year following the loss of the DWP funding. Ms Murray explained that the budgetary implications of this issue had been included in the budget strategy to Cabinet. It had been agreed to fund a one off allocation of £180,000 to keep the service open during 2010/11 for a transitional period, while careful consideration was given to the options for the future of the service and employment of its staff. For example, to work closely with the proposed kitchen production centre to find alternative employment for staff. Members praised this example as a good piece of partnership working.
- 46.22 Mr Marshall explained that when proposing the deletion of posts in the Royal Pavilions and Museum, the focus was on delivering Value for Money. This would be assisted by the new ticketing system and, where possible, maintaining front line services. In contrast the efficiency savings last year had focussed on senior staff, which had achieved about £236,000 savings.
- 46.23 When asked if he had been able to preserve services while making these savings, Mr Marshall told members that our performance in National Indicator 11 was the highest outside London. Our performance was also very good on other customer satisfaction measures. The Committee then asked him if he was confident that the service could perform satisfactorily in 2010/11, given that it depends so heavily on generating income. Mr Marshall drew their attention to the cuts the service had made in order to reinvest, for example to make improvements into the library service.
- 46.24 Ms Silley explained that systems thinking consisted of looking at all aspects of the service from the point of view of the customer. Each process was examined from the initial inquiry to the outcome, to check whether any task that we had undertaken did not have a purpose. It was a specific management technique which focussed on the customer.
- 46.25 Adam Bates, Head of Tourism & Venues confirmed that his service could also improve its performance in the areas it has set. It had delivered efficiencies last year, while improving income generation and performance. For example, they had renegotiated catering contracts and improved partnership working on the ticketing system. They have

discontinued the premium rate for contacting the visitor centre and believed they could compensate by achieving increased bookings.

- 46.26 Members raised the issue of the marketing of venues. Ms Bagshawe informed them that the Old Courthouse was used a reasonable amount, primarily for lectures, due to the way it was funded. Last year the venue was used 64 times, of which 24 were educational events. There were planning restrictions on its conditions of use, regarding opening hours and no amplified noise which could leak to other buildings, that had led it to being primarily used by the Universities.
- 46.27 The Members were told that there was insufficient space in the venue to build a value generator such as a café. The venue was promoted alongside the Pavilion and the Theatre and the on line ticketing system would give it a presence on the web. The fees and changes for the Old Courthouse had been agreed by the Culture Cabinet in autumn. When asked if the venue broke even, Ms Bagshawe confirmed that the corporate hire fees were set to recover full costs, but not the educational hire charges. The committee agreed that it should consider at a later date the use of the Old Courthouse and other council owned venues, by the Council.
- 46.28 Mr Marshall said that consultation on these budget proposals had focussed on the management team and cabinet members. Since the information had become publicly available, they had been informing stakeholders such as the Arts Council and the Brighton Dome and Festival.
- 46.29 Members asked whether increased energy costs had been taken into account. They heard that these costs are looked at monthly and would form the basis of future contract negotiations. Ms Silley had been told by colleagues in Property Services that energy costs are likely to go down.
- 46.30 Ms Murray described the work that had been done to share support teams in the Directorate. Both her teams had been relocated together and were sharing a number of support staff. A review had been carried out into how the teams could be better supported and the findings have been reported to them. For example, looking at pressurised times in the year, such as two weeks before the White Night Festival.
- 46.31 Ms Murray told members that the draft Executive Response to the Environmental Industries Scrutiny had informed the allocation of posts. They had just appointed a junior research post and a Section 106 post and were re-examining other posts. The current thinking was that to appoint a sub-sector specific post, every time attention was needed for a particular business sub-sector was not sustainable. Therefore they were more likely to re-cast the Creative Industries Officer post, to give the replacement post responsibility for specific sub-sectoral development such as creative and environmental industries. The findings of the Panel had demonstrated that the needs of both sectors were similar, even though the sectors were at different stages of development.
- 46.32 Ms Murray then explained that the contract with the Brighton Dome was linked to the RPI, which allowed them to make the saving. Brighton Dome and Festival Ltd were aware of these figures, were making their own significant savings, had appointed a new Head of Development and were planning well for the future.



- 46.33 David Fleming, Assistant Director of Major Projects, described the collaborative approach being taken between the Falmer Community Stadium, Falmer Academy and the Universities. The individual project managers met as a group on a regular basis to discuss issues such as common footpaths, emergency routes, highway works and proper access. When asked if this could lead to joint procurement, Mr Fleming couldn't see why not, but to some extent this would be determined by timing. Members asked if this good practice could be transferred to Preston Barracks.
- 46.34 Councillor David Smith stated that the last two years had been difficult for the Sports and Leisure service, particularly due to energy costs which had hit the King Alfred especially hard. They had managed to introduce the free swimming for under 16s and over 60s. They also expected to raise £80,000 from the sale of new beach huts. Ian Shurrock, Head of Sport & Leisure confirmed that the huts are currently subject to a planning application and could sell in the region of £10,000 each.
- 46.35 Mr Shurrock explained that the rent reviews for the sea front businesses were undertaken individually. They now had an in-house surveyor to carry out the rent reviews of small businesses but needed the specialist expertise of an external surveyor for the large clubs. He explained that the practice of using an external surveyor had been incorrectly reported. The external surveyor had been paid by either a fixed retainer or a fee linked to the increase in rent on certain properties.
- 46.36 When asked if the businesses had been informed of the rent rises and if they could reach up to £80,000, Ian Shurrock confirmed that the rent increases only applied to those businesses who were due to rise this year, or had rent reviews outstanding. Members emphasised that this could be a sensitive issue for small businesses if they faced a rent increase due to the council not carrying out this task.
- 46.37 Mr Shurrock told the Committee that Mytime Active (a Social Enterprise not-for-profit trust) from Bromley had been awarded the contract to manage the council's golf courses. They also ran courses in Bexley and Maidstone. This was a ten year contract and could ensure that the savings could be met while securing the future of two golf courses. An exciting part of the contract was a golfing programme it would run for both young people.
- 46.38 **RESOLVED** – *that the above comments on the proposals go onto the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2010.*

The meeting concluded at 16.15pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**  
**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**5.00PM 5 JANUARY 2010**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Older (Chairman); McCaffery (Deputy Chairman), Allen, Phillips, Smart, Wakefield-Jarrett, Barnett and Wells

**Statutory Co-optees: with voting rights::** Mike Wilson (Diocese of Chichester) and David Sanders (Diocese of Arundel & Brighton)

**Non-Statutory Co-optees:** Carrie Britton (Children's Health) (Non-Voting Co-Optee)

**Apologies:** Councillor Pat Drake, Councillor Lynda Hyde, Mark Price, Rachel Travers, Kenya Simpson-Martin and Rohan Lowe

**PART ONE**

**33. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**33.1 Declaration of Substitutes**

Councillor Wells substituted for Councillor Hyde and Councillor Barnett substituted for Councillor Drake.

Apologies were sent from the Youth Council Representatives, Rachel Travers (CVSF representative) and Mark Price (Youth Services)

**33.2 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**33.3 Declaration of Party Whip**

There were none.

**33.4 Exclusion from the Press and Public**

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

**33.5 RESOLVED** – That the press and public not be excluded from the meeting.

**34. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

34.1 The Chair introduced the meeting saying this was a Special Budget meeting for CYPOSC to look at the Budget proposals for 2010-11, ask questions, raise issues and put forward any suggestions.

CYPOSC would then need to forward their comments and views to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission for the 26 January 2010.

**35. BUDGET UPDATE & DIRECT BUDGET STRATEGY FOR 2010/11**

35.1 The Director of Children's Services and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People presented the Children Services Budget proposals for 2010/11 and answered questions with the Assistant Directors of Strategic Commissioning and Governance, Learning, Schools and Skills, City Wide Services, Clinical Director, Head of Service for City Early Years and Service and the Head of Financial Services for (Children, Families and Schools).

35.2 Members were advised that there were considerable challenges facing CYPT, the main budget pressures being:

- Child Agency and In House Placements
- Services for Care Leavers
- Legal/Court costs
- Area Preventative Grants

35.3 Members were pleased to be reassured that an independent review of duty and assessments had concluded the thresholds used by CYPT were at the right levels.

35.4 In response to a question regarding whether Children's Centres were reaching those most at risk members were advised that further work was being undertaken to provide more support for families with domestic violence, alcohol and substance misuse issues.

35.5 The Committee were informed some services are offered that all families can access such as health visitors whilst other services are by invitation only and these are the services used to target interventions.

35.6 The Committee heard how the costs of mother and baby placements were high, the process is expensive and outcomes vary. Work has begun to understand why there is a higher use of these placements in Brighton and Hove than in other areas. This will include looking at which types of families gain most from having a placement and identifying better value alternatives.

35.7 Members were told that compared to other authorities it was felt that the judicial system in Brighton and Hove was much more in favour of having mother and baby placements. CYPT is working to ensure the courts have confidence in alternative assessment arrangements.

- 35.8 There will be a further emphasis placed on holistic working and the use of projects such as “Team Around the Family” and the “Family Pathfinder Project” for earlier intervention.
- 35.9 Members were informed that potentially £1 million, of the £1,940 million of savings had been earmarked from the Central Risk Provision for Children’s Services in light of the increased pressures following the death of Baby P, the Laming Report and the impact this has had on safeguarding.
- 35.10 In answer to a question that further clarification was needed on the statement that ‘there are no service pressures within CYPT as a result of grant funding coming to an end. The Director of CYPT advised members that for 2010/11 no grant funding streams were to end.
- 35.11 The Director confirmed that savings would be focused in those areas that were less effective with support being maintained for the most cost effective interventions.
- 35.12 In response to a question on the £200,000 savings and the concerns from members on making this saving from the Connexions grant, the Committee heard how the current commissioning of services was not achieving its outcomes and services needed to look at more cost effective intervention and decommission less effective services. It was noted that Members requested further comparative information on the proposals, for savings in relation to Connexions and the Youth Offending Service (YOS).
- 35.13 Members felt that the level of information provided for the budget scrutiny needed to be reviewed as the high-level nature of the documents meant it was difficult meaningfully scrutinise the proposals.
- 35.14 In answer to a question on how the school transport budget savings were going to be made taking into account the sensitive nature of young people with Special Education Needs (SEN), the Committee heard that there was a clear strategy focusing on a more vigorous application of criteria and by looking at each individual case, by looking at reducing long, uncomfortable journeys for young people and whether they could access services nearer to their home. Reviewing expensive individual taxi journeys and looking at alternatives to promote independence and more creative individual programmes were also being explored.
- 35.15 Members informed that they were aware of transport issues for pupils with SEN attending out of school activities, how some of these arrangements were inflexible and that families would need to be consulted about any changes to school transport. Members agreed to forward on extra information to the Assistant Director of Learning, Schools and Skills.
- 35.16 In answer to a question on whether the proposed savings had any implications to staff, the Committee heard that Children’s Services did not propose any redundancies.
- 35.17 In answer to a question on whether health partners could contribute to the Children’s Services budget, Members heard how the Children’s Trust already worked closely with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and other agencies; decisions of budgets and services were being developed on a ‘Trust’ basis, rather than within organisational silos. This can be seen in the Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) which sets out the Trusts

priorities which inform where savings and investment in services are made. The CYPP is owned by all Trust partners. Work is ongoing to look at how savings can be made in improved working between organisations.

- 35.18 In answer to a question as to what savings were being made from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in comparison to safeguarding services, Members heard how the DSG budget for 2010/11 is £135 million and the 4.1% increase is ring-fenced grant money. The Schools Forum have examined different ways to use this additional funding e.g. recruiting more educational physiologists. Schools are expected to take on a wider range of services to meet the increasing needs of families.
- 35.19 Further information was requested on who fixed the 4.1% increase and how the variations in grant percentages worked, Members were told that there was a complicated formula and schools would receive between the minimum funding guarantee of 2.1% per pupil and the maximum of 4.1% per pupil of the funding, other factors such as deprivation were also taken into account.
- 35.20 Concerns were raised in relation to savings within Children in Care, the Committee were informed how there was a full complement of staff and how there had been Social Care recruitment issues in the past which had led to Agency staff covering vacancies, which was not cost-effective. The vacancies had been filled through joint working with the University and creative promotional advertising. Other Local Authorities also had recruitment and retention issues within Social Care.
- 35.21 In answer to a question on what priorities and pressures the Schools Forum identified, the Committee were told how funding pools had been put together for creative solutions such as Mentors for schools. Schools were increasingly adopting a cluster approach to solving challenges.
- 35.22 Questioning on the Aiming High Grant focused on how savings would be identified. Members were advised that many of the services provided by this grant were already delivered using base budgets; these would be transferred to the grant budget. There would be a long lead in time to changes in service provision.
- 35.23 In answer to question on whether the Aiming High Grant was match funded by the PCT and whether it was ring-fenced, the Committee heard how the budget wasn't ring-fenced and services were provided through the base budget and governance arrangements; as savings have to be made this year discussions would need to be held with partners and parents.
- 35.24 Concern was expressed regarding £300k savings within Looked After Children budget. Members were advised that this level of resource represented a very small number of cases. Members were informed that the rate of referrals was up from previous years and that the most cost effective packages would be need to be identified with child safety being at the forefront, by reviewing decisions, joint working, market management and procurement.
- 35.25 In response to whether there were any job losses through the £987,000 (VFM) savings; Members heard that there were no proposals for redundancies. Members raised concerns as to whether staff would have a heavier workload, the Committee were

informed that if staff were expected to do more they would be graded appropriately, but it was more around making efficiency savings through looking at different and possibly more local care packages; same provision at a lower cost.

35.26 In response to a question on the length of service of Agency staff and whether there was sufficient time for them to bond with the children and their families, the Committee heard how the focus was on recruiting to permanent positions as this short term placements were costly; with emphasis being on the retention of staff. Social Workers had high workloads and this was a common factor with other authorities too and that 7 extra staff and 2 Independent Review Officers had been recruited since the Lord Laming report.

35.27 Members were concerned at the £4.5 million (10%) savings that Children's Services were expected to make. It was felt that the percentage savings should be different with the varying Directorates as Children Services were responsible for child protection and safeguarding of children, their percentage savings should be reduced and in future savings should be looked at differently.

35.28 Councillor McCaffery said that she was aware of the dedication of the staff, but could not support these proposals due to the level of savings proposed which she believed rendered it an unsafe budget which jeopardised children's safety .

**35.29 RESOLVED-**

(1) Members resolved to ask for additional information on the following proposals :

- Connexions
- YOS
- transport and impact on after school activities
- DSG and schools formula
- Aiming High
- additional information around the VFM proposals

(2) Members to forward on information of families who had issues with transport for out of school activities to the AD for Learning, Schools and Skills.

(3) Further information was requested on the Dedicated Schools Grant who fixed the 4.1% increase and how the variations in percentages were calculated.

(4) In future the Council to look at different ways of making savings rather than the same percentages from each directorate.

(5) CYPOSC to forward its comments to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC) meeting of the 26 January 2010, to be incorporated into the single scrutiny response to the budget.

The meeting concluded at 6.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of



**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**  
**ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**4.00PM 19 JANUARY 2010**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Morgan (Chairman); Davey, Davis, Drake, Smart, Wells and Taylor

**Also present:** Councillor Dee Simson

**PART ONE**

**38. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**36a Declarations of Substitutes**

Councillor Taylor was substituting for Councillor Rufus; Councillor Janio had given his apologies.

**36b Declarations of Interests**

There were none.

**36c Declaration of Party Whip**

There were none.

**36d Exclusion of Press and Public**

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

**39. SCRUTINY OF DIRECTORATE BUDGET STRATEGIES**

- 39.1 This budget scrutiny meeting had been rearranged at short notice, following the ice and snow on 18 December 2009 that led to postponement. Comments on this report would be forwarded together with comments from the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, to 26 January 2010 Overview and Scrutiny Commission.
- 39.2 The Chairman welcomed everyone including the Cabinet Member for Community Affairs, Inclusion and Internal Affairs, who introduced the report on the Scrutiny of Directorate Budgets. The Cabinet Member for Environment was unable to be present.
- 39.3 Members asked for more information on a wide range of budget proposals.
- 39.4 The Committee asked about investment in the seafront railings, shelters and work on Hove Lagoon (paragraph 3.5 refers) and how this related to the 're-investment' paragraphs in the Appendix. There was a question on the need to invest and alternative sources of funding such as Heritage Lottery fund and Section 106 agreements, which the Committee wished to forward to the Commission.
- 39.5 The Chairman asked whether the £100,000 at bullet point 5 of the main report was for consultants. The Director of Environment assumed it was. This needed to be confirmed by the Director of Finance and Resources.
- 39.6 Costs of the transport model were questioned including the on-going costs to sustain it. The Assistant Director, Sustainable Transport explained that the model replicated traffic conditions and assessed demand, enabling robust decisions to be made on major projects. It was essential to keep the model validated and 'live' with local data. Officers were asked for more information on the business case.
- 39.7 The Committee were pleased that Castleham Industries would be kept open and that new beach huts would be built subject to planning permission.
- 39.8 The Head of Finance answered a question on the King Alfred Leisure Centre by referring to the capital investment programme summary at Appendix 2.
- 39.9 Regarding concessionary fares funding the Head of Finance confirmed that £9.3 Million (report paragraph 3.13) was proposed to be allocated in 2010/2011 for all bus operations in the City. Members asked for an update on final allocations when available.
- 39.10 The Director clarified that 'Staff posts affected' in the Environment summary table at Appendix 1, referred to jobs at risk or a significant change to jobs and there had been a reduction in this number (20) since the report was written. No compulsory redundancies were proposed and updated figures would be provided to the Committee.
- 39.11 Answering a question on the possible effect of last year's savings in CityClean service area in the Council's response to the recent icy conditions the Director told the meeting

that the combination of CityParks and CityClean services had made it quicker and easier to mobilise a large workforce to deal with ice and snow.

- 39.12 The effect on the budget of potholes created by the ice was being investigated.
- 39.13 Asked about the rise in parking charges the Head of Finance said that a general rise of 2% to allow for inflation was part of the overall budget strategy, although on average parking charges would rise by around 3%. Many individual charges would remain frozen, others are proposed to reduce and some would rise by significantly more than 3%. Individual charges were being reported to the 26 January Environment CMM meeting.
- 39.14 The range of other opportunities to improve value for money and generate additional income, as stated in the fourth paragraph of the 'Strategic Response to this Context' referred to efficiency savings regarding maintenance of parking machines, reduced number of Assistant Directors, lower advertising costs, management arrangements for the two golf courses and beach huts, the Director told the meeting.
- 39.15 Councillor Simson described the 'Turning the Tide' pilot programme which supports families regarding anti-social behaviour that was starting in the East of the City.
- 39.16 Members expressed concern about savings within 'Public Safety' and asked about the meaning of the tabulated 'Public Safety' budget proposals summary. It was agreed that clarification of the 'efficiency' and 'other' savings in Public Safety would be forwarded to the Committee.
- 39.17 The Committee heard there were five hate crime caseworkers in the Community Safety Team. One such post had already been vacant for more than 12 months would not be filled; there would be no reduction in service.
- 39.18 The Assistant Director, Public Safety detailed the range of roles of the case workers. She said that the management changes included her own post and a senior management position.
- 39.19 In City Services, because the growth in waste had not been as large as projected the savings of £290,000 were proposed to be used to smooth the cost of waste disposal.
- 39.20 The Committee discussed subsidised bus services with the Assistant Director of Sustainable Transport who confirmed that the enhanced service 27 is included in the £1.5 million subsidised bus routes. Mindful of statutory notice periods and contractual obligations he said that public consultation may be required before re-prioritising. Some contracts were able to run on a commercial basis and could be removed from subsidy.
- 39.21 The Committee asked about the process for deciding on which level of service to propose as savings and requested that this specific matter be taken forward to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.
- 39.22 Officers replied to further queries on gum removal, environmental standards of operational vehicles, Local Transport Plan capital funding.

**39.23 RESOLVED:**

(a) The Committee supported proposed investment in Castleham Industries and additional beach huts

(b) That updated information be requested on; affected staff posts and Concessionary fares final allocations if available.

(c) That the following areas of concern be forwarded to 29 January 2010 OSC:

- Need for investment in sea-front maintenance and possible alternative sources of funding
- Business case for transport model
- Process for agreeing subsidised bus services
- Possible effect of vacant Hate Crime worker post remaining unfilled

The meeting concluded at 5.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**  
**ADULT SOCIAL CARE & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**3.00PM 21 JANUARY 2010**

**BANQUETING ROOM, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Meadows (Chairman); Allen, Barnett, Pidgeon, Taylor, Randall and Oxley

**Co-opted Members:**

**PART ONE**

**39. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**39A. Declarations of Substitutes**

39.1 Councillor Brian Oxley announced that he was attending as substitute for Councillor Geoff Wells; Councillor Bill Randall announced that he was attending as substitute for Councillor Georgia Wrighton.

**39B. Declarations of Interest**

39.2 Councillor Randall declared a personal interest due to his involvement with the Local Delivery Vehicle.

**39C. Declarations of Party Whip**

39.3 There were none.

**39D. Exclusion of Press and Public**

39.4 In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

**39.5 RESOLVED** – That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

**40. SCRUTINY OF DIRECTORATE BUDGET STRATEGIES**

- 40.1 Councillor Ken Norman, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, introduced the Adult Social Care (ASC) section of this item. Councillor Maria Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the sections relating to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), to Housing Strategy and Supporting People (SP), and to Learning Disabilities (LD).
- 40.2 In response to a query about savings identified in terms of the LD budget, Councillor Caulfield told members that the healthcare element of care for some learning disabled people was chargeable to the local Primary Care Trust (PCT), but had formerly not been pursued by the council. This money was now being collected, with the result that there were considerable extra funds available to the service, facilitating a reduction in the council's LD budget allocation.
- 40.3 In answer to questions relating to savings to be made via the 'personalisation' of ASC (and to a more limited degree the introduction of personalisation and personal budgets to LD services), Councillors Norman and Caulfield informed members that national research offered robust evidence that significant savings were possible via the roll-out of personal budgeting, and that these savings should grow as the roll-out progressed. Joy Hollister, Director of Adult Social Care and Housing, added that Brighton & Hove was in a fortunate position, having not been one of the earliest adopters of personal budgets, as we were able to learn from both the good and bad practice of 'pilot' authorities. There was strong evidence that, by following the best emerging practice (particularly in terms of best practice resource allocation systems), personalisation could deliver significant savings.
- 40.4 In response to a question about negotiations with the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) over the council's commissioning of their services, members were told that discussions had been very positive, with the trust recognising that the council's 0% uplift in funding was in fact generous given the national financial situation (all the more so because the council had agreed extra funding to reflect demographic changes in the city which would result in extra work for SPFT).
- 40.5 Asked to explain how personalisation might deliver savings, Joy Hollister referred to the example of assessing people's needs. Formerly, a great deal of staff time and resources might have been spent on professional assessment of a client's needs, even in situations where that client's support requirements were minimal. With personalisation, it should, in many instances, be possible for clients to assess their own support requirements (with a degree of input from professionals – termed 'co-production'), leading to a very significant reduction in the costs of assessment.
- 40.6 In response to questions about the anticipated re-design of day services and possible cost savings and risks involved in this process, Councillor Norman told members that day service provision would be the subject of a forth-coming public consultation, and no decisions in regard to these services could be made until the results of this consultation were analysed. Joy Hollister noted that council-provided day services were currently delivered at a very high unit cost, as occupancy rates were typically very poor. In

contrast, some city day services provided by the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector operated at a much lower unit cost as these services were full or over-subscribed. There was therefore a very clear argument for favouring these cost-effective services over services which provided poor value for money, and the council was planning accordingly. However, some council day services were of such a specialist nature (e.g. offering significant therapeutic benefits to attendees) that it was not considered appropriate to consider their replacement with mainstream 3<sup>rd</sup> sector-provided services.

- 40.7 In response to questions about home care, Joy Hollister told members that the council had re-designed its services in response to the re-ablement agenda, with mainstream home care now commissioned from the independent sector, allowing the council's in-house home care team to be re-deployed in the specialist task of delivering re-ablement care. This was the best possible use of resources, given that it would simply not be possible within existing budget constraints for the council to deliver its re-ablement commitments and its mainstream home care commitments via the use of in-house staff. Whilst independent sector care providers are cheaper than in-house provision, all providers used by the council are rated as either 'good' or 'excellent'.
- 40.8 In answer to a question about anticipated increases in client contributions to care costs, Joy Hollister explained that this related to quicker financial assessment of clients, meaning that clients who were required to self-fund their care could be billed more promptly (clients may not be charged for care until their finances have been assessed, nor can charges be back-dated).
- 40.9 In response to questions about supported housing, Councillor Caulfield agreed that more supported housing was needed in the city, but stressed that this was difficult to achieve in the current financial climate, with little or no capital funding available. However, the council was exploring alternative measures, including looking at 'moving on' supported housing clients who could be returned to general needs housing, encouraging independent sector providers to take a greater interest in this sector, and investigating the possible use of undeveloped housing land for future developments.
- 40.10 Councillor Caulfield also told members that the council was committed to working with clients to ensure that they accessed all the benefits to which they were entitled. This is a priority for Housing Management, and pilot schemes around the city have proved extremely successful. The Welfare Rights team will seek to train other council teams in maximising benefit take-up and the council is also working closely on this issue with the Department of Work and Pensions and with the MacMillan cancer charity (i.e. on encouraging people with cancer to access the benefits to which they are entitled). Members noted that there might be a case for increasing resources here, as the cost benefits of maximising benefit uptake are likely to far outweigh any extra costs to the council.
- 40.11 In response to questions regarding the ASC and housing workforce, members were told that there were no plans for redundancies in housing or LD services. In ASC there may be some redundancies, although the figures quoted in the budget strategy report represent a worse case scenario and the council will endeavour to minimise the negative impact of essential workforce re-organisation. There is no intention to make compulsory redundancies. Posts have yet to be identified but would likely be a range across all areas with the possibility of some in home care and day services.

- 40.12 Asked what percentage of the £1 million allocated to possible redundancy payments across the council had been ear-marked for ASC, Joy Hollister told members that she did not have the figures to hand but would endeavour to pass them on.
- 40.13 In response to queries regarding the Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV), Councillor Caulfield told members that there had been thorough consultation with tenants over this issue (particularly via Housing Management Consultative Committee – HMCC), and the consensus was that the council should continue to actively pursue LDV options while the original LDV bid was being considered by the Government. The council faced stringent penalties if it failed to meet Decent Homes standards, and there was therefore still considerable value in pursuing LDV options, particularly as recent developments in financial markets might mean that the returns on the LDV could be higher than initially assumed (original financial projections were made at the nadir of the financial crisis and might prove over-cautious should markets improve). More funding (in the form of a loan from general reserves) will be required to facilitate re-modelling of the LDV finances, but this money will be repaid once the LDV is operational.
- 40.14 In reply to members' questions regarding the future of the Adult Social Care and Housing Directorate, members were told that this was a question which should be addressed to the council's Chief Executive as no one present was in a position to provide a definitive answer.
- 40.15 The Chair thanked the officers and members who had answered questions and expressed her good wishes for Joy Hollister in her new post with the City of London.

**41. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO CABINET OR THE RELEVANT CABINET MEMBER MEETING**

- 41.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of



**DRAFT EXTRACT FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD  
ON THE 14 JANUARY 2010**

**CABINET**

**4.00PM 4 JANUARY 2010**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Mears (Chairman), Brown, Caulfield, Fallon-Khan, Kemble, K Norman, Simson, Smith and Young

**Also in attendance:** Councillors Hawkes (Opposition Spokesperson, Labour Group), Randall (Convenor, Green Group) and Watkins (Opposition Spokesperson, Liberal Democrat Group)

**Other Members present:** Councillors Bennett, Davis, Older and Oxley

**153 COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT 2009**

- 153.1 The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning the first year of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) judgements (for copy see minute book).
- 153.2 Councillor Randall commented that overall Members should be pleased with the work the Council was doing with its partners. He raised some concerns in relation to health inequalities and advised that the Council's partners needed to set clearer targets in some areas, which should be followed up and monitored. He commented that forthcoming decisions on how funds would be raised would impact on how issues in relation to the council's housing stock would be addressed. He also stated that more could be done to improve efficiency, enhance the environment and tackle carbon emissions.
- 153.3 Councillor Watkins also highlighted concerns in relation to health inequalities, in addition to problems of drug misuse and hospital admissions due to alcohol related problems. He added that overall the assessment was good, but that the Council must not become complacent.
- 153.4 Councillor Hawkes stated that the assessment showed that the Council had much to be proud of. She raised concerns over education in relation to recent reports in the media and asked for confirmation of a targeted action plan to tackle the problems. She also highlighted uncertainty over plans to improve the housing stock and concerns in relation to child poverty and mortality rates. She added that the Council must ensure that government funding was being properly targeted.
- 153.5 The Chairman shared the concerns about the housing stock, and added that the since they had come into power, the Administration had been working to achieve

the investment needed after many years of no investment.

- 153.6 Councillor Norman advised that the Council would not become complacent in relation to Adult Social Care services and was constantly working to ensure progress in all areas by working with partners to tackle problem areas. He stated that, contrary to reports in the media, Adult Social Care performance had improved every year under the current Administration.
- 153.7 Councillor Brown stated that the assessment reported many positive outcomes for Children's Services and that Ofsted had rated the Council as 'Performs Well'. She agreed that the GCSE results had been disappointing and assured Members that robust improvement plans had been put in place. Immediate action had been taken in two of the city's schools where surprisingly low results had been seen and both were receiving experienced help and support has been provided. Four of the city's secondary school schools were in receipt of funding from the National Challenge Programme and this had mainly been used for additional staffing support and includes a raising attainment plan. Councillor Brown added that the report from the annual review of services from National Strategies stated that the local authority supported schools through a wide range of targeted programmes.

Councillor Brown advised that in none of the city's secondary schools was behaviour rated as less than satisfactory. However, less than half were rated as good and a strategy was in place to achieve good behaviour in all schools. She added that general behaviour strategy had resulted in less exclusions and increased attendance.

In response to a query from Councillor Hawkes, Councillor Brown reported that the performance of the majority of ethnic minority children had been above the national average.

Councillor Brown advised that the assessment had shown positive outcomes for many areas of Children's Services, including children's homes, adoption services, childcare, primary school standards, involving young people in decision-making, anti-social behaviour and the proportions of young people staying in education and achieving full qualifications.

- 153.8 Councillor Caulfield explained that since becoming the Administration the percentage of council homes not meeting the Decent Homes standard had decreased from nearly 60% to 38.5%, which represented a dramatic improvement given that the impact of the Local Delivery Vehicle and maintenance contract had not yet been seen. Examples of improvements made without funding from the government included a programme of new front doors, removal of shared facilities and improved energy efficiency through insulation.
- 153.9 Councillor Fallon-Khan commented that Brighton & Hove's popularity as a tourist destination contributed to carbon emissions, but that improvements would be realised through work proposed to meet the 10:10 commitment.
- 153.10 Councillor Randall added that 44% of carbon emissions came from housing, making improvement to the Council's housing stock essential.

153.11 **RESOLVED** – That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet accepted the following recommendations:

- (1) That the findings and judgements contained within the Comprehensive Area & Organisation Assessment reports be noted.
- (2) That officers be instructed to ensure that improvement recommendations from the CAA are reflected in departmental, business and improvement planning over the coming year.

