Brighton & Hove City Council

COUNCIL ADDENDUM

4.30PM, THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2010

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

ADDENDUM

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WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

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

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

(a) Mr K Kirk

"Does the Council agree that the government's plans for the NHS in its recent white paper, involve such a degree of reorganisation that it should be implemented only once adequate consultation with the medical profession and the wider public has taken place, and only when the policy has been proved effective by pilot schemes? Further, the timing of this policy, involving massive transitional costs when the government is planning extensive cuts in public spending, is ill advised.

Councillor Norman, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health, will reply.

(b) Ms R Lowe

"How confident are the council about youth services continuing to meet the needs for disabled young people?"

Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, will reply.

(c) Mr L Walter

"In June of this year a large piece of concrete fell nearly 8 floors outside the front entrance of Dudeney Lodge on Upper Hollingdean Road. To date, the only action taken by the Council has been the construction of scaffolding at the bottom of the building. Will the Cabinet Member commit to carrying out a full maintenance survey of Dudeney Lodge to determine the cause of the incident and to reassure the residents that a similar episode can be prevented?"

Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing, will reply.

(d) Mr P Philo

"I am a concerned resident of Withdean Ward and user of the facilities of Withdean Stadium. At a time of cuts in public spending I am concerned about its future post the departure of the football club next year. Can the Council please reassure me that that the stadium will not be closed down or the facilities reduced next year?"

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation & Tourism will reply.

(e) Ms S Shanks

"What is happening to the council owned property at 243/ 245 Preston Road which has been empty and was recently occupied by squatters and previously by travellers? This is a Victorian property which has been allowed to fall into disrepair. Is the council planning to repair it and use for housing, if so when, it has now been 'officially 'empty for at least two years."

Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing, will reply.

(f) Mr R Jarrett

"Would Councillor Theobald please ask Highways to investigate the feasibility of installing pedestrian crossing lights at the junction of Cromwell Road and The Drive in Hove, on the two arms of the junction which do not currently have them? This would remove an anomaly and make it safer for residents to cross these busy roads road rather than taking their lives in their hands. This would be of particular benefit to parents with pushchairs and people in mobility buggies."

Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment, will reply.

(g) Mr S Guy

"Could the Cabinet Member provide me with the following information with regard to the proposal to turn Portslade Community College into an Academy:

Where the funding to finance the proposal is coming from;
How much will be earmarked for the new build;
The time-scale for the release of these funds;
What conditions are going to be imposed on the sponsor in order to secure the sponsorship and therefore the funding; and

Is the sponsor going to be required to make any financial commitment at all in order to secure the agreement of the local authority to award the sponsorship deal?

Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, will reply.

(h) Ms L Ogmore

"This local authority purports to be 'a council the city deserves', yet once again vital front-line services are being targeted. Within the CYPT, despite flimsy claims from the Coalition government, it is the front-line workers who are at risk, and almost all are women on lower salary scales. Moreover, citizens and service users most deeply affected are young people and now pre-school children!

What did our city do to deserve this and how can the BHCC's strapline be justified if this trend is to continue with the closure of Bright Start?"

Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, will reply.

(i) Ms J Statham

"The report Agenda Item 34 presented 11th October is flimsy - literally and metaphorically. Could the councillor(s) substantiate claims therein by providing:

i) details of all subsidies from CYPT budget for comparison;
ii) revised figures showing how subsidy/deficit reduction with a) 10% increase in fees and b) full occupancy rate;
iii) justification that the future of this city and Bright Start attendees will be best served by having another library, art gallery or museum instead of pre-school nursery provision
iv) evidence that £12K is a meaningful overspend in the overall budget;
v) the difference between bottom and top end of staff pay scales"

Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, will reply.

(j) Mr D Jones

"Could the councillor please explain why the report to CYP Cabinet Member meeting on the 11th October on Bright Start nursery contained misleading information such as the cost of building work, some of which wasn't seen as necessary a year ago, and was only £5000? It appears the building work will happen regardless of what will happen to the nursery in April 2011."

Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, will reply.

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which one Member of the Council, nominated by the Mayor, may speak in response. It shall then be moved by the Mayor and voted on without discussion that the deputation be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

Notification of two Deputations has been received.
The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

25(a) DEPUTATION CONCERNING CONNEXIONS

Ms C Summers (Spokesperson)
Deputation on Connexions
"There's nothing much along this street: a cafe' that shuts early, a convenience store, hairdresser...hardly a hub of youth activity and interest. Yet at Hollingdean Dip the flagship centre for Brighton & Hove Connexions services has never been busier. In the two years since its opening more than 140 13-19 year-olds receive careers and personal advice at their Tuesday drop-in facility per month. And that's not all. The rest of the week is set aside for many other services for youngsters such as crime prevention, school inclusion, sexual health work and NEET engagement and prevention. It is labour intensive employing 14 regular staff alone in this deprived area of the city.

Two years is not long enough to see a young person through troubled times - particularly at school - and set them on the right tracks to a meaningful and fulfilling academic, work or social life; it's not enough time to equip them and reassure them of their enormous value in society. The staff at Connexions committed to their work for the long haul and if the staff (who are modestly paid) are willing to do that so likewise should their employer.

Yet despite the overwhelming need, and proven success, of this centre the Administration has chosen to abort it. We understand the difficulties of this decision and we recognise the challenges for any local council in navigating through the current climate of reduced spending and imposed cuts. However, there are surely those times when an authority, such as this Administration, ought to make a stand for the city which it governs. It ought to protect the services that help the most vulnerable and it ought to make a case to central government for doing so.

There is a "To Let" sign outside the Connexions building in Hollingdean because the contract with the private owner expires in 10 days time, so we have to ask: what will happen to all the local young people on the 1st November? Where will they go? The nearest alternative is the Young People's Centre in Ship Street; by no means within walking distance and an entirely different environment. And what about the staff in Hollingdean? Their jobs have now been secured until the New Year but where do they go next month? Some of them are here now and would very much like to know where they

should turn up for work on Monday 1st November and what work they will be expected to do. It's the not knowing that is so upsetting and rightly so.

So why close the Hollingdean centre? Is it because the rent is unaffordable? At £8,000 per year this simply does not compare with Marmion Road in Hove, for example, where rent is three times this amount and not even for frontline services – it is purely administrative support.

The Administration have made reference to evidence of outcomes from the money spent on the services being not as positive as they could be. We are curious to understand the nature of this evidence and what would be considered as positive outcomes by the Administration, when the staff and young people themselves continue to report good news. If, as was also stated, funding will continue for careers advice in schools what happens to the young people who attend schools that don't have a careers teacher? What happens to children from broken families who need advice that teachers simply are not trained to give? And what happens to the really vulnerable older ones who are not in education, employment or training?

Many questions, not many answers, and one struggles to believe that the Cabinet has done its homework properly. Do they really appreciate the long-term effects on a struggling young generation of closing down any of the city's youth services let alone the busiest at Hollingdean Dip?

For the sake of the city's young people and the enormously dedicated staff that make such a difference to their lives we strongly urge the Administration to take the following actions:

1. rescind their decision to close down the centre in Hollingdean Dip,
2. commit to a full Equality Impact Assessment as required by law,
3. depending on the results that emerge, guarantee that the centre will remain open and continue to be fully staffed,
4. lobby central government for the return of their grant."

Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, will respond.

Deputation supported by:
Ms. C Summers
Mr. L Walter

25(b) DEPUTATION CONCERNING THE PROPOSAL TO TURN PORTSLADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE INTO AN ACADEMY

Ms P Tindall (Spokesperson)
"Portslade Community College IS the heart of the community.

It is central not just to the education of our children but hosts a whole range of extra curricular activities for children and a whole range of extra curricular activities for adults.

It provides facilities for recreational events from the sporting and leisure to the celebratory to the entertaining.
Local charities rely on its facilities, such as Quad, the charity for those suffering from Downs Syndrome.

From very small children to those residents in their mature years, PCC provide a COMMUNITY service, responds to the needs of the community, is at the heart of the community.

All this is under threat, or felt to be under threat by the proposal to transfer the school from the jurisdiction of the local authority to that of Mr. Aldridge and his proposal to turn it into an academy.

From being an institution which is accountable to the community directly, and politically through its status as a maintained school, it will pass into the hands of an unaccountable businessman (or some other party bidding for the sponsorship) with no links to the community, and quite frankly, with no interest in the educational welfare of our children; in fact he has conceded on previous occasions that he is not an educationalist.

The decision making will be concentrated in the hands of Mr. Aldridge and his appointees, (or some other party bidding for sponsorship) with no obligation in law for him to consult or even discuss what he does with the school once it passes into his hands.

The record of Mr. Aldridge's involvement in the education system in our city does not inspire confidence if the academisation of Falmer High School is anything to go by, and since the current head has overseen such significant improvements in academic performance, we are alarmed that that progress will be severely disrupted by this development.

We, the concerned stakeholders in the school therefore urge the local authority to reconsider the whole proposal, and move away from any further consideration of Mr. Aldridge's (or any other interested party) involvement, and instead make a firm decision to keep the school under local authority jurisdiction, as a COMMUNITY school.

And if the local authority is in any doubt about the strength of feeling regarding this issue, then at the very least they should organise a GENUINE consultation exercise, and ballot all those involved with the school: parents; staff; residents, those with a stake in the future of the school, and those who, at present feel that the local authority is moving forward on this issue without taking their views and concerns into consideration.

Deputation supported by:
Ms. P Tindall
Mr. C Ellis
Mr. P Tindall
Mr. S. Guy
Mr. A Clark

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answers:

(a) Councillor Hamilton

"I understand that as part of the current organisational transformation the council intends to produce a comprehensive approach to the management of talent. When do you expect to have this in place? Will career pathways be part of the employment framework of the council? Will this lead to greater career and development opportunities for all employees who seek them, and will there be a structured approach for all abilities as a way of motivating and retaining the existing workforce?"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

When do you expect to have this in place?
"We hope to begin work on a talent management strategy for the organisation from April 2011. This allows time for the leadership team to work with HR to analyse the current workforce profile, predict the future needs and develop a workforce plan by end of March 2011. The thinking involved in doing this will allow the talent management plan to be targeted to BHCC needs."

Will career pathways be part of the employment framework of the council?
"We already have career pathways in some areas of the organisation e.g. legal services. It is intended with the introduction of job families, for this practice to widen, however we are at early stages in our thinking. Job families enable more flexible use of the workforce and for employees themselves to identify development needs required to move up in their existing job family or transfer to another job family."

Will this lead to greater career and development opportunities for all employees who seek them? Will there be a structured approach for all abilities as a way of motivating and retaining the existing workforce?
"Our intent would be for any talent management strategy that we put in place to be about motivating, retaining and developing the talent that the organisation needs to be successful. It is not clear yet how it will be applied across the organisation."

(b) Councillor Elgood

"Can the Cabinet Member for Finance give a progress up-date on the implementation of the Coalition Government's requirement for councils to publish items of expenditure over £500, and to explain why the council has yet to implement it when other councils already have?"

Reply from Councillor Young, Cabinet Member for Finance.

"The Council will publish items of expenditure over £500 on 25 October 2010. This will include both a detailed breakdown of expenditure incurred in 2009/10 accessible through a user friendly free software package "Spotlight on Spend" and monthly files showing expenditure for 2010/11 derived from our creditor system. This provides a huge amount of information on council spending for example the April 2010 spending data file alone runs to 8,875 lines, and at has taken some time to process all this data in a form that satisfies the draft regulations. A recent survey has shown that so far 27% of all councils in the South East Region had published their spending data, but most of the authorities were small districts and only 16% of Unitary and County Councils had published their data."

(c) Councillor Elgood

"Can the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People confirm the number of users of the Connexions service (for the year from September 2009) listed by council ward?"

Reply from Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People.

"We are currently not able to give the requested information listed by council ward. However, the citywide figures for the period requested, by age of young person, are as follows:

Age	Number of young people using Connexions 1/9/2009 – 31/8/2010
13	73
14	228
15	629
16	1375
17	1392
18	1233
19	1312
20	803
21	159
22	61
23	36
24	29
25	23
Total	7353

Please note that this table shows individual, different young people. The vast majority had more than one intervention over the year. Interventions can range from sending out information, telephone support through to a full intensive one-to-one interview."

(d) Councillor Kitcat

"The latest Sitemorse local government website benchmarking report placed Brighton & Hove City Council's site in 331st place out of 429 Local Authority sites reviewed. Among other things the report flagged the site's accessibility as being 'impaired'.

Given the key role the new media industry plays in the local economy, can the Cabinet Member responsible explain what plans are in place to remedy this situation so that the site is improved and is accessible to users of all abilities?"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

1. Accessibility is a key requirement for the ongoing development of the Council website. The website has been designed to meet established industry standards and conforms to recognised accessibility guidelines.

2. The council subscribes to The Society for IT Management (SOCITM), an association for ICT professionals in the public and third sectors. In the 2010 SOCITM review of all local authority websites, the Brighton & Hove website received a 3 star rating. This is assessed against a range of different factors including accessibility.

3. Sitemorse is a private organisation which sells its consultancy and audit services to organisations. The Sitemorse ranking of the Council website is based on their own diagnosis and prioritisation of a range of different factors.

4. We are currently implementing the first of a three phase web development program as part of a channel shift strategy which underpins our commitment to citizen centric services.

5. Stage 1 will review and improve the design and navigation aspects of the existing website. Working with Community Contact Point staff we will incorporate user feedback to inform future design and accessibility needs.

6. Stage 2 will include significant changes to the structure and architecture of the website to move it closer to the council's ambition of a personalised, transactional and transparent web experience which meets the needs of all its customers.

7. Officers are establishing an approach using the established Equalities Impact Assessment process which will directly address accessibility issues across all services impacted under this programme.

(e) Councillor Kitcat

"Will the Leader of the Council commit to wherever possible now publishing Council information, including spending data, under an open licence such as Creative Commons or the National Archive's new Open Government Licence?"

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

"The Council is committed to openness and transparency and will always make information available to the public unless there are good legal or other reasons not to do so, such as the need to protect people's privacy.

The exact form in which information is published depends on the subject and the intended audience. We will always adopt the most appropriate means taking into account legal requirements, good practice as well as government guidance.

On the issue of publishing expenditure, I confirm that we will publish items of expenditure over £500 on 25 October 2010. This will include both a detailed breakdown of expenditure incurred in 2009/10 and monthly files showing expenditure for 2010/11 derived from our creditor system. We will be using Data.Gov terms and conditions for our published information which is in line with government guidance to ensure that the data is presented in a usable format.

I hope this answers your question"

(f) Councillor Kitcat

"The option of a return to the committee system for this Council as a part of the Localism Bill is not to be even voted on in Parliament until late 2011. Given this fact, can the Leader of the Council explain why the Independent Remuneration Panel's report on councillor allowances still has not been voted on by this Council?"

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

"As you will be aware, the Independent Remuneration Panel's report was deferred at Full Council in March because of concerns raised by some of the Members over a number of the recommendations put forward. Since then Group Leaders have had an opportunity to put forward any comments for the Panel's consideration and as you will have seen, their report is on the agenda for today's meeting together with an officer report.

The matter of a possible return to the committee system is a subject for separate debate and in no way affects the decision we will be making today."

(g) Councillor Duncan

"Does the Cabinet Member believe that American Express is doing enough to compensate residents suffering severe inconvenience, and in some cases loss of earnings from working at home, as a result of the construction of the firm's new facility in the Carlton Hill area of the Queen's Park ward?"

Reply from Councillor Fallon-Khan, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects.

"I would like to thank Councillor Duncan for his question

It is my understanding that Amex is doing a great deal to assist local residents who may be suffering inconvenience.

In addition to a range of long term community benefits secured through the planning permission under a section 106 Agreement, AMEX has arranged a range of measures to reduce the impact of the works on the local community. These include:

- Monthly residents' liaison meetings and a monthly newsletter distributed by hand to 250 neighbours informing them of the progress of the works.

- An information website.

- Providing residents with prior warning of any particularly disruptive construction activities which are unavoidable.

- Appointing a full time neighbour liaison manager who is contactable on a freephone number during working hours.

- A free fortnightly window and car cleaning service to 166 households around the site. I understand that 108 households have taken up the window cleaning and 54 households the car cleaning.

- An off site community room for home workers and residents to use free of charge. This has been equipped with four computers, a printer, wi-fi, 2 sofas, TV, kitchen facilities and is available by pre-booking. This room has been available for two months now, although I understand that only 4 passes have been issued and 5 bookings made to date.

I am aware that senior officers of the council are continuing to work with local residents and Amex representatives to help ensure that any inconvenience is kept to a minimum.

(h) Councillor Duncan

"The weekend of October 9th-10th was one of the warmest October weekends in years. Temperatures reached 20 degrees, and the beach in many areas was packed, both with tourists and local residents, some of whom were enjoying swimming in the sea. How many council-provided lifeguards were on duty?"

Reply from Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism.

"The council provides a full beach lifeguard service from the end of May until the first week of September. The service is made up of 26 seasonal lifeguards and patrol boat crew and covers 11 stations across our 13 km of Seafront.

During the summer months byelaws come into place which provide designated bathing zones which are identified by yellow marker buoys. These zones are lifeguarded from 9.30 am – 7.00 pm 7 days a week and red and yellow flags are used to inform the public when it is safe to swim. All buoys and flags are removed at the end of the season and anyone choosing to swim does so at their own risk.

Outside of the summer season the Seafront is managed by a team of 6 permanent full time Seafront Officers. The team is based at the Seafront Office and operates 365 days of the year.

On the weekend in question there were 4 full time Seafront Officers on duty who are all beach lifeguard qualified. The Seafront Officers patrol the seafront but are not permanently based on the beaches as lifeguards are in the summer.

The water temperature drops considerably after the summer season and Seafront Officers would not encourage people to swim unless they are equipped for these conditions. A rescue undertaken by Seafront Officers on 25th September this year resulted in one officer and 2 casualties being taken to hospital suffering from hypothermia after having been in the water for only 20 minutes."

(i) Councillor Duncan

"Do you think the system by which tenant participants are involved in decision-making about the council's housing policies, through Housing Management Consultative Committee meetings, and in other ways, could be improved in any way?"

Reply from Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing.

"Council housing residents have a very powerful influence in the development of housing policies in Brighton & Hove. Our recent annual report demonstrates how closely a wide range of residents are involved in shaping our housing policies and priorities and in checking on our performance.

We currently support around 70 resident associations, four Area Housing Panels and nearly 20 other resident groups, including the City Assembly. Housing Management Consultative Committee is the meeting where final policy proposals are debated by both Members and residents, but much wider consultation takes place before reports are presented to the committee.

During the last 12 months we have increased the range of ways in which tenants and leaseholders can get involved. We now have a database of nearly 2000 residents who are interested in getting involved. We use the database to involve residents from under-represented groups and to involve residents in ways which suit them, including using social networking media.

Through our involvement of residents we empower them to gain new skills. We've trained resident volunteers as 'mystery shoppers' to test our customer

service, involved residents in a 'rate your estate' initiative and offered training for residents to become energy advisers.

Residents are involved in the procurement of new contractors such as the new repairs partnership, and a new group looking at building new Council homes. Residents also control a yearly Estate Development Budget for improvements to their neighbourhoods.

The Council is continuously working with residents to further improve their meaningful involvement in the management of their homes and neighbourhoods. Residents are currently working with us on the development of our Resident Involvement Strategy and over the next two weeks we are holding a series of 'Tell us what you think!' events to find out resident priorities for our services."

(j) Councillor Duncan

"Members of Brighton and Hove Older People's Council have warned that the withdrawal of the Free Swimming Scheme for over-60s will have a negative impact on some people's health, and ultimately will cost society more money than it saves.

Will you reconsider the council's decision not to subsidise entirely swimming locally for all under-18s and over 60s, and reinstate free swimming for all children and older people in the city's public swimming pools with immediate effect?"

Reply from Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism.

"The Free Swimming Initiative was originally to be funded for a limited period of 2 years.

Following the government announcement in June that the funding would cease 8 months earlier than planned, the Council explored the option of retaining the initiative. With the continued support funding from NHS Brighton & Hove, we have been able to continue to offer free swimming to children aged 11 and under until 31st March 2011.

We shall continue to work in partnership with NHS Brighton & Hove to explore further options to extend the initiative beyond this date. This will be subject to available Council and NHS Brighton & Hove funding.

In the meantime, over 60s continue to benefit from the concessionary rate for swimming which provides a discount of approximately 40% off the standard price.

There are also plans to develop a leisure card scheme to encourage further use of the Council's sports facilities.

*Note – We have yet to begin discussions with NHS Brighton & Hove on the extension of an initiative beyond 31st March 2011."

(k) Councillor Randall

"Can Councillor Caulfield tell us when the survey of potential sites for social housing in the city on council-owned land will be published?"

Reply from Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing.

"As reported at Housing Management Consultative Committee, the Cabinet Member for Housing has announced that the Council wish work with tenants to take advantage of potential investment opportunities to build new Council homes. The Proposals are being developed in partnership with a Tenants Working Group on Building New Council Homes Chaired by Cabinet Member for Housing and consisting of representatives from the Repairs & Maintenance Monitoring Group and Asset Management Panel. A paper is being brought to HMCC and Cabinet in November updating on progress.

The aim of the Tenant Working Group is to 'To work together to provide quality new council homes that meet the needs of our residents'. The objectives are:

- Identify suitable sites for development
- Advise on acceptable design and unit mix for sites
- Assist with the tender process to identify a suitable build contractor
- Assist with the design of a local apprenticeship programme
- Monitor the contract to ensure the necessary standards are achieved
- Advise and assist with promotional activity for any new scheme
- Advise and assist with local lettings plans for new developments
- Help with the official opening and welcoming new tenants onto the scheme."

(l) Councillor Randall

"Can the Leader of the Council give an assurance that charitable organisations running public events in the city that require street closures will not be charged for loss of parking revenue?"

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

"Historically there has been no charge for loss of parking revenue due to road closures for a defined number of events on Madeira Drive. In addition to this, we do not currently charge for suspended parking bays during the London to Brighton Bike Ride or during Pride.

The council also facilitates a number of other charitable events and community events that can involve road closures, often without charge.

It would not be possible to offer a blanket no charging policy otherwise we would face an avalanche of requests for road closures that could be disruptive

to general movement across the city. However there is normally only a nominal fee for charitable organisations where it is possible to accommodate such requests."

(m) Councillor McCaffery

"Petitions to the council demand a lot of time and work from residents who believe they will be listened to. I therefore ask this Council:

1. How many petitions were received by the Council between May 2009 and May 2010?
2. How many of these petitions resulted in the outcome requested by the petition?"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

"I can confirm that for the municipal year 2009/10 a total of 77 petitions have been received by the council.

Individual petitioners themselves will be best placed to follow up on any actions they have asked for. It would be extremely time consuming for officers to determine exactly how many of the 77 petitions have resulted in the outcome requested by the petition, not least because the outcome is often not clear cut.. Petitions may be noted at the time by the Cabinet Member or other body and, whilst often not resulting in any immediate action, can be built into future work programmes. Examples of this are many road safety and parking related petitions. I would, therefore, recommend to residents that it is always worthwhile petitioning the Council to raise awareness of any matter of concern to them – the Council agenda before us today perfectly illustrates why."

PETITION REPORT

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT

STOP THE CLEARANCE

Add a further recommendation at 2.2 as shown in bold italics:

Recommendation

2.1 That the petition is referred to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration; and

2.2 That the strength of the public feeling on this issue be taken into account, and in future the Cabinet Member be requested to ensure that:-

- ***Full and meaningful consultation takes place with local people and adequate environmental impact surveys are carried out before any clearance work is done in areas like the Wild Park.***
- ***Clear explanations are given as to the scale, nature and justification of any such proposed work.***
- ***Any work carried out should be done with care and precision.***

Proposed by: Cllr Christine Simson Seconded by: Cllr Warren Morgan

Council	Agenda Item 27(a)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

PETITION REPORT

GREEN GROUP AMENDMENT

STOP THE CLEARANCE

Add a further recommendation at 2.2 as shown in bold italics:

Recommendation

2.1 That the petition is referred to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration; and

2.2 That the Cabinet Member is recommended to acknowledge and express support for the new model of consultation that is now underway; and to acknowledge that this presents a fresh and positive opportunity for the aspirations of the different park users and interest groups to be taken on board in shaping a new plan for future work on this project.

Proposed by: Cllr Pete West Seconded by: Cllr Sven Rufus

Council	Agenda Item 27(b)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

PETITION REPORT

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT

PARKING IN PRESTON PARK

Add a further recommendation at 2.2 as shown in bold italics:

Recommendation

2.1 That the petition is referred to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration; and

2.2 That the Cabinet Member be requested to instruct officers to ensure that the issue of parking in Preston Park is looked at holistically by the Highways and Parks Department working together to seek a solution to the benefit of park users bearing in mind the impact of the recently introduced controlled parking areas in Preston Park Avenue and south of the railway.

Proposed by: Cllr Juliet McCaffery Seconded by: Cllr Gill Mitchell

Council	Agenda Item 27(b)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

PETITION REPORT

GREEN GROUP AMENDMENT

PARKING IN PRESTON PARK

Add a further recommendation at 2.2 as shown in bold italics:

Recommendation

2.1 That the petition is referred to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration; and

2.2 That the Cabinet Member give consideration to the regulation of parking use within Preston Park under Road Traffic regulations or by securing other effective means for the benefit of park users, and to deter all-day parking by commuters.

Proposed by: Cllr Amy Kennedy Seconded by: Cllr Sven Rufus

Council	Agenda Item 27(c)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

PETITION REPORT

GREEN GROUP AMENDMENT

CONNEXIONS

Add two further recommendations at 2.2 and 2.3 as shown in bold italics:

Recommendation

2.1 That the petition is referred to the Cabinet for consideration; and

2.2 *That the Cabinet r*econsiders its in-year budget cuts to ensure that Connexions services are protected; and

2.3 That the Cabinet immediately holds discussions with Connexions staff about how to approach the impending cuts from central government without compromising the quality of the service.

Proposed by: Cllr Rachel Fryer Seconded by: Cllr Alex Phillips

Council	Agenda Item 40(a)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT

MAINTAIN THE BRIGHTON & HOVE CONNEXIONS SERVICE

Insert new paragraphs 4 and 5 as shown in bold italics and delete text as struck through and replace with new text as shown in bold italics:

"This council recognises and values the work of the Brighton and Hove Connexions Service that provides high quality, impartial guidance to 13 – 19yr old young people relating to personal development, training and careers and seeks to ensure that young people make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life. It also recognises the specialist work undertaken with young people who have special educational needs.

This council acknowledges that the work of the Connexions Personal Advisors has ~~directly~~ ***helped to*** contribute~~d~~ to the reduction in entrants to the Youth Justice System and numbers of teenage pregnancies in the city, where the council's own performance indicators demonstrate falling numbers.

In addition, there have been early signs of a welcome reduction in the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training. (NEET).

However, this Council recognises that Information, Advice and Guidance services for young people are unlikely to continue in their current form in the future. It notes, for example, research carried out for the cross-party Local Government Association which found that only a fifth of children find formal careers services helpful and that resources could be targeted much more effectively on disadvantaged and vulnerable young people.

It also notes the findings of the report on social mobility – 'Unleashing Aspirations' - commissioned by the previous Government, which recommended the Connexions service be split up because it wasn't targeting help effectively to those who most needed it.

~~Therefore, this council expresses its great concern at the total reduction of £700,000 funding to the Connexions budget that has put the jobs of up to 40 Connexions workers at risk as well as significantly reducing the service to young people and jeopardising the progress made.~~

~~It~~ ***This Council*** calls on the Cabinet to continue ***to work closely with all stakeholders to ensure that the £1.5 million still in the Connexions budget for 2010/11 is used to produce the best outcomes for children and young people in***

the City and to carry ~~the Brighton & Hove Connexions Service while urgently carrying~~ out the following work:

- To properly examine the government proposals for the future of careers guidance and support contained within the Education Bill, due to be published in Autumn 2010.

- To ~~fully~~ ***continue to*** consult with schools as to their capacity and willingness to take on this work and the implications for the transfer of statutory responsibilities.

- To carry out an Equality Impact Assessment to show how the impact of ~~closing~~ ***reducing funding*** for the Connexions service will affect service users, particularly those with SEN.

- To take into account the implications of the Government spending review.

- ***Once the Coalition Government's legislative intentions are clear, t***o bring forward a report to Cabinet that sets out how a personal development, careers advice and training guidance service will be maintained in the city and supported so that young people can be best helped to make decisions affecting their future."

Proposed by: Cllr Vanessa Brown Seconded by: Cllr Mary Mears

Council	Agenda Item 40(a)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

GREEN GROUP AMENDMENT

MAINTAIN THE BRIGHTON & HOVE CONNEXIONS SERVICE

Insert text as shown in bold italics and an additional final bullet point as shown in bold italics:

"This council recognises and values the work of the Brighton and Hove Connexions Service that provides high quality, impartial guidance to 13 – 19yr old young people relating to personal development, training and careers and seeks to ensure that young people make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life. It also recognises the specialist work undertaken with young people who have special educational needs. ***Connexions also caters for young people up to the age of 24 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.***

This council acknowledges that the work of the Connexions Personal Advisors has directly contributed to the reduction in entrants to the Youth Justice System and numbers of teenage pregnancies in the city, where the council's own performance indicators demonstrate falling numbers.

In addition, there have been early signs of a welcome reduction in the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET*).* ***Arguably this is absolutely imperative now that unemployment amongst young people is so high and is set to increase as government cuts set in.***

Therefore, this council expresses its great concern at the total reduction of £700,000 funding to the Connexions budget that has put the jobs of up to 40 Connexions workers at risk as well as significantly reducing the service to young people and jeopardising the progress made.

It calls on the Cabinet to continue the Brighton & Hove Connexions Service, while urgently carrying out the following work:

- To properly examine the government proposals for the future of careers guidance and support contained within the Education Bill, due to be published in Autumn 2010.

- To fully consult with schools as to their capacity and willingness to take on this work and the implications for the transfer of statutory responsibilities.

- To carry out an Equality Impact Assessment to show how the impact of closing the Connexions service will affect service users, particularly those with SEN ***(Special Educational Needs)****.*

- To take into account the implications of the Government spending review.

- To bring forward a report to Cabinet that sets out how a personal development, careers advice and training guidance service will be maintained in the city and supported so that ***all*** young people can be best helped to make decisions affecting their future.

- ***To ensure that the lack of communication and consultation undertaken by the Council in this instance with Connexions is never repeated"***

Proposed by: Cllr Rachel Fryer Seconded by: Cllr Alex Phillips

Council	Agenda Item 40(b)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

GREEN GROUP AMENDMENT

NATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR DEBT AND THE LOCAL RESPONSE

Insert new paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 as shown in bold italics; delete text as stuck through and insert new text as shown in bold italics.

"This Council notes with regret that national debt interest payments now total £120 million a day or £44 billion a year. To put this in context, these debt payments are higher than the national schools budget (£41 billion), transport (£15 billion), defence (£37 billion) and crime/justice (£21 billion).

This Council further notes the comments of the Institute for Fiscal Studies that the previous Government's approach to the public finances from 2001 had, even before the financial crisis hit "left the UK with one of the largest structural budget deficits in the developed world".

~~Furthermore, this Council welcomes the recent comments of the independent International Monetary Fund who have endorsed the Coalition Government's deficit reduction plans concluding that they "greatly reduce the risk of a costly loss of confidence in fiscal sustainability and will help rebalance the economy".~~

This Council notes that whilst deficit reduction is an important long-term aim, the current economic situation does not warrant the cuts proposed. In relative terms the UK national budget deficit is not excessively large compared with its historical levels.

- ***As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) the UK national debt is at 71%, a manageable level. This compares well with the highs of 181% and 238% in the past century.***

- ***Despite claims by George Osborne, the UK's national debt is a much lower proportion of our GDP than many countries including Italy, France, Germany, Singapore, Belgium, Canada and Japan.***

- ***The current average UK debt maturity is 17 years, hence the UK has a much longer period in which to repay or refinance its debt. By comparison Spain are urgently trying to move their average debt maturity up to just 6.7 years. Unlike the UK, countries including Spain, Italy and Greece are facing huge immediate repayments as short term bonds mature in the next 12 months.***

- ***The key risk from national debt is the interest payable. In the past century UK public debt interest peaked around 7% of GDP in the 1920s. It is currently between 3 and 4% and wouldn't be an economic risk unless it breached 12% of GDP.***

- ***The UK is experiencing no difficulties in selling bonds to the market, thereby rendering false the government justification for cuts being needed to ease the bond markets.***

This Council regrets that the deficit was added to by the:

- ***£20.34 billion spent on the British involvement in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars;***
- ***significant tax evasion including an estimated £11.5 billion of unpaid VAT;***
- ***multi-billion pound bailout of the banks made necessary by reckless private sector lending.***

This Council believes that the deficit can be gradually and effectively reduced with measures that protect jobs and reduce inequalities. These measures would include:

- ***Lowering the 50% income tax band to £100,000;***
- ***Increasing the capital gains tax rate for those in the highest income tax band;***
- ***Reform Council Tax so larger houses pay much more, and smaller ones less;***
- ***Introduce VAT and fuel duty on aviation;***
- ***Save £6 billion a year on tax credits by increasing the minimum wage to be a living wage.***

At a local level, this Council welcomes and endorses the work being undertaken to prepare the organisation for expected central Government funding reductions in the Comprehensive Spending Review. In particular:

- ~~The Intelligent Commissioning proposals which will focus scarce resources more effectively on the outcomes which residents want.~~
- The ongoing work through the City's Public Service Board, towards implementing Place Based Budgets which the LGA estimates would save £100 billion nationally over the lifetime of a Parliament~~ and notes that this would not be possible without an Intelligent Commissioning approach~~.
- The Value for Money review which will achieve savings of up to £35 million over 4 years with potential ongoing savings of up to £18 million. This will be in addition to the £30 million which has been saved over the last 3 years.
- The Improving Customer Experience programme – working towards a one stop shop for residents accessing Council services.

This Council seeks to reassure residents that these pre-emptive measures put the organisation in a very good position compared to many other local authorities, ~~to absorb its contribution to the national debt reduction programme without adversely affecting vital frontline services~~ ***but that frontline services and vulnerable***

residents in Brighton and Hove will nonetheless suffer greatly as a result of the reckless, ideologically-driven cuts imposed by the Coalition, including the shocking 25.5% cut in the local government budget.

This Council notes its critical role in supporting the local economy. Each job lost ends up having a net cost to the economy and the taxpayer. This Council will work tirelessly to protect frontline services from cuts whilst seeking to spend taxpayer funds as carefully and efficiently as possible.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- ~~Endorse the pre-emptive measures outlined above.~~

- ***Ask the Cabinet, the Chief Executive and the City's 3 MPs to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressing our concern at the depth and speed of the cuts and the impact they will have on the people of our city.***

- Write to the City's 3 MPs urging them to highlight the innovative work of Brighton & Hove City Council in Parliament.

- Urge the Cabinet to continue to maintain a constructive dialogue with Government, both directly and through the City's local MPs, in order to get residents the best possible deal from the changes announced in the June emergency budget, the CSR and the forthcoming Local Government Finance Settlement."

Proposed by: Cllr Jason Kitcat Seconded by: Cllr. Paul Steedman

NOTICE OF MOTION

CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT

SUPPORT FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD-BASED POLICING IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Insert new paragraph 6 and delete text as struck through and replace with new text as shown in bold italics:

"The Neighbourhood-based policing model adopted in Brighton and Hove has been successful in reducing the fear of crime, actual crime – and improving public confidence in the police and residents' belief that they live in safer communities.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have played a key role in the delivery of Neighbourhood Policing in the city, by attending Local Action Team and other community group meetings, listening to communities and setting local priorities for policing in line with residents' wishes, and holding regular 'street briefings'.

Their regular patrols are welcomed and appreciated by neighbourhoods across the city, and they have built excellent relationships with all sectors and all ages in the community.

PCSOs do not have the power of arrest, as they are not 'warranted officers' – and this has been key to their success in many ways – not least as they have been able to develop relationships based on trust and confidence rather than power and hierarchies in the communities they serve.

~~Yet all this is under threat. As a result of successive cuts, by this Government and the last, to Sussex Police's budget, the Chief Constable of Sussex Police has warned that more that 1,000 people currently employed by Sussex Police are set to lose their jobs.~~

This council expresses its support for the Neighbourhood Policing model so successfully used here in Brighton and Hove in recent years, and its support for the valuable work of our PCSOs.

However, this Council recognises that Sussex Police, like all other public bodies in the country, will need to make significant savings over the next five years in order to help reduce the country's massive budget deficit. It welcomes the recent comments of the Chief Constable of Sussex Police that this "represents an opportunity to put people, not paperwork, at the heart of policing." and his reassurance that "we're fundamentally changing the way we police to put people at the centre of all we do." These comments represent a

welcome and constructive approach to reduced funding rather than an irresponsible refusal to acknowledge economic reality.

Accordingly, it:

~~(i) Requests the Chief Executive to write to the city's MPs, and the Home Secretary, asking them to reconsider any cuts to Sussex Police budgets;~~

~~(ii)~~ Urges Sussex Police Authority to ensure that Neighbourhood Policing remains at the heart of the way policing is delivered in Brighton and Hove, ~~and that numbers of PCSOs serving the city are maintained at current levels in the 2011/12 budget;~~

(iii) Requests officers to consider ***innovative new*** ways this council could ~~directly fund PCSOs~~ ***further strengthen neighbourhood policing*** in the city ***through its successful partnership arrangements***.~~, either through direct sponsorship or through the BID system~~; and

(iv) Welcomes Sussex Police's commitment to ensure that the proposed cuts in staff are assessed for their impact on equalities as a way of maintaining community support for the way policing is delivered in the city."

Proposed by: Cllr Dee Simson Seconded by: Cllr. Lynda Hyde

Council	Agenda Item 40(d)
21 October 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT

THE IMPACT OF CUTS ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Insert

"This Council recognises that children and young people are uniquely vulnerable. As a result they mostly depend on adults to voice their needs to government and in political debate, and we acknowledge that responsibility.

This Council notes that proposals by the national government and the Local Administration unfairly target children and young people by:

- Withdrawing funding for Connexions services;
- Restricting child benefit in a way which can unfairly penalise certain types of families;
- Withdrawing free school meals for those families on low incomes;
- Requiring significant cuts to the education budget whilst also preparing the way for increased university tuition fees;
- Significantly reducing road safety budgets when 13 children have been killed or seriously injured on the city's roads;
- Drastic NHS reorganisations and budget freezes which will inevitably impact the city's Children & Young People's Trust.
- ***Cutting the £1.1m playbuilder scheme that would have seen children's playgrounds across the city renovated or rebuilt.***
- ***Scrapping guaranteed 1to 1 tuition in schools.***

Excessive cuts have dampened the economy leading to a lack of job creation which risks a lost generation for our young people

This Council disputes the need for such rapid and hard hitting cuts especially when they affect the most vulnerable in our society and calls on the Cabinet to:

- Reconsider budget cuts affecting children and young people;

- Consider children and young people as a specific 'at risk' group in the equality impact assessment of the 2011-12 council budget;

- ***Carry out an urgent consultation with schools to assess their readiness to take any further responsibilities and capability to deal with the impact of the National Coalition Government's cuts to Children and Young People;***

- ***To carry out an Equality Impact Assessment to fully show how the impact of cuts will affect children and young people."***

Proposed by: Cllr Juliet McCaffery Seconded by: Cllr Melanie Davis

NOTICE OF MOTION

GREEN GROUP AMENDMENT

IMPROVEMENTS TO EDUCATION PROVISION IN BRIGHTON & HOVE

Delete third bullet point as struck through and insert new text at the end of the final paragraph as shown in bold italics:

"This Council warmly welcomes recent developments around schools and education provision in the City. These include:

- The acquisition of the Connaught Centre in Hove to form part of a new 3 form entry primary school in the City.
- The expansion of Davigdor, Somerhill, West Blatchington, Goldstone, Westdene, Benfield, Balfour and Queen's Park Schools.
- ~~The opening of the new Brighton Aldridge Community Academy in September 2010, with the brand new campus due to open in September 2011, representing a £25 million investment in young people for one of the most deprived areas of the City.~~
- The City's best ever GCSE results, with the number of students gaining five or more A*-C grades including English and Maths, going from 44.5% to 49.1%. Three schools in particular – Hove Park, Portslade Community College and Varndean – improved their results by more than 10%.
- 28% of the City's nursery, infant, primary and junior schools have obtained an outstanding Ofsted rating compared to a national figure of 19%
- 80% of the City's childcare providers have a good / outstanding rating compared to a national average of 68%.

Therefore, this Council would like to place on record its thanks to all the pupils, parents / carers, teachers, childcare providers, officers and partners across the City who have made these successes possible. ***However, this Council is concerned for the future of young people's education in the City, and would therefore urge the Cabinet to:***

- ***look into providing a local primary school which would cater fully for residents who live on the Brighton and Hove border.***

- ***consider options for creating a local authority secondary school in the City centre, securing a more even dispersal of secondary school sites across the city.***

- ***receive a report which sets out how recent improvements in school results will be sustained to secure a successful future for school leavers in the event of Connexions support being reduced, and with***

other potential cuts to education.

- ***secure the provision of childcare for the needs of working parents in their area, as closing central Brighton nurseries and instead offering Hove as an alternative does not meet the needs of all parents."***

Proposed by: Cllr Alex Phillips Seconded by: Cllr. Rachel Fryer