Brighton & Hove City Council

COUNCIL ADDENDUM

4.30PM, THURSDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2010

COUNCIL CHAMBER, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

ADDENDUM

ITEM		Page
47.	WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.	1 - 6
49.	PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE	7 - 12
50.	WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.	13 - 26
51.	ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS	27 - 28
56.	STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY - THREE YEAR REVIEW	29 - 30
57.	NOTICES OF MOTION.	31 - 38

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) Captain David Briggs

"Brighton & Hove spends £148,300.000 on Housing Benefit, of that £88,200.000 is paid to private landlords or (59.5%).

Many properties owned by private landlords are below minimum standards required by the Housing Act 2004.

Landlords should be made responsible to provide appropriate homes for their tenants and only be allowed recourse to public funds once these properties are brought up to legal minimum standards.

Is it not possible for private landlords to be made to bring these homes up to minimum standards, before tenants end up trapped in homes that are unsuitable, sometimes barely habitable and with very little recourse?"

Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing, will reply.

(b) Ms Helena Joyce

"My 3 year old son Lawrie will start a local school in September 2011 and I selected Bright Start (2 years ago) as it offered the very best run up to formal education. If the nursery closes where is Lawrie supposed to go for the 5 month period between April and September that will ensure he is not unsettled at this crucial time?"

Note: Ms. Joyce has agreed to the question being taken as read and therefore the Cabinet Member will be called directly to respond.

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

(c) Ms Helena Tolinsson

"How will the council either compensate parents for the loss of earning if no suitable childcare can be found after April or reimburse parents for the additional costs of finding childcare in way of having to pay deposits for putting the child's name on waiting lists for privately run nurseries which in itself is no guarantee of a place being available at the time it's required?"

Note: Ms. Tolinsson has agreed to the question being taken as read and therefore the Cabinet Member will be called directly to respond.

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

(d) Mr Oliver Sykes

"In view of the apparent shortfall of in the region of £260,000 in the Culture and Enterprise budget for 2011 /12, would Councillor Smith please tell us whether he will be making any cuts to the funding of the libraries services?

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

(e) Mr Christopher Hawtree

"Would Councillor Theobald please tell us what steps he will be taking, and when, to increase the composting of domestic food waste?"

Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment, will reply.

(f) Miss Tamsin Wright

"I cried when I heard that Bright Start might be closed down. Children love it, parents trust it, the staff are the best you can find, and the government wants nursery places. How can the Council say they want Brighton to be the best place for children to grow up when they want to close Bright Start down"

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

(g) Mr Robert Jarrett

"Would Councillor Theobald please report the findings of the officers that he asked to fully investigate the junction of Cromwell Road and The Drive in Hove, with a view to assessing the need for pedestrian crossings?"

Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment, will reply.

(h) Ms Christina Summers

"Can the council provide a full update on its progress with the redevelopment plans for Preston Barracks on Lewes Road originally set out and agreed in a 2005 planning brief in which it was acknowledged to be a significant landmark as a "gateway to the city?"

Councillor Fallon-Khan, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment & Major Projects, will reply.

(i) Mr Ed Titheridge

"For clarity and transparency in decision making, what criteria will the Council be using to decide whether Bright Start Nursery should close?"

Note: Mr. Titheridge has agreed to the question being taken as read and therefore the Cabinet Member will be called directly to respond.

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

(j) Mr Andrew McKay

"The Equalities and Human Rights Commission Impact Assessment Guidance states that "EIA should start prior to policy development or at the design stages of the review and continue throughout the policy development" - Can you explain what you (Vanessa Brown) / the committee has done to date about ensuring proper implementation of their Equalities Impact Assessment obligations?"

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

(k) Mr Stephen Guy

"At the last meeting of the council in October Councillor Brown stated that the proposal to move to academy status at Portslade Community College was to proceed, with the council working in close cooperation with the Aldridge Foundation. My question is in two parts:

- How advanced does this process have to be before there is a genuine attempt to consult with the parents, staff and other stakeholders, in other words all those people in the local community who rely on the college for the services it provides, as well as the education of the children in the locality?

- And will that consultation incorporate a ballot of those stakeholders in order that there can be a genuine opportunity for the parents staff and other stakeholders to have their say on the proposal?"

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

(l) Master Charlie Connaghan

"Could the councillors please come and visit Bright Start to see for themselves why I love my nursery?"

Note: Master Connaghan has agreed to the question being taken as read and therefore the Cabinet Member will be called directly to respond.

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

(m) Mr Colin Wellstead

"At the last meeting on the 21st October, Councillor Brown stated that, "The state of the building is very poor. It has high windows and little light". I would suggest this is good for a nursery because why would you want low windows? Also, the light is little, well my child is also little. Where is her evidence that the light is little, does the nursery not have lights and high windows? It has been stated that the ceilings are too low, they are about 8 foot, my child is 2 foot. Why do they need altering?"

Note: Mr. Wellstead has agreed to the question being taken as read and therefore the Cabinet Member will be called directly to respond.

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

(n) Ms Shelley Hands

"The 1996 Employment Relations Act states that "consultation" regarding job losses must be "meaningful". Why was an £87,0000 saving in nursery provision, confirmed subsequently as Bright Start, published in papers for cabinet meeting for 9th/12/2010, and "the Argus", 3/12/2010, while the consultation period of 30 days hadn't even finished?"

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

(o) Ms Juliet Bruce

"In the Argus on 15/11/2010 Councillor Brown stated that the council has "a statutory duty to protect the most vulnerable children in the city".

Does the councillor not agree that all children are, by definition vulnerable, that no assessment has made of the numbers of "most vulnerable" children in the Bright Start area, and that all children deserve the kind of "high quality" childcare provided by Bright Start?"

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

(p) Mr Dave Jones

"In response to my previous question to full council at 21/10/2010, Vanessa Brown stated that "more information about the feasibility study (re. Bright Start building work) will be included in the consultation document". Why did the said document continue to wrongly claim that £230,000 was needed to bring "the building up to a good standard" and then exclude the information from Informal Cabinet,12/5/2010 which said " the scope of the works could be reduced to cost£160,000…(and)…could be reduced further by only addressing the most urgent issues"?

Can Vanessa Brown give an accurate figure for necessary building work now essential work is completed?"

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

Council	Agenda Item 49(a)
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

PETITION REPORT

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT

BRIGHT START NURSERY

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

Recommendation

2.1 That the petition is referred to the Children & Young People Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration; and

2.2 That in recognition of the widespread opposition to the proposed closure of Bright Start Nursery as demonstrated by the petition, the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People undertakes to carry out the following measures before proceeding any further with its proposals for closure:

- ***To properly explore all options for improving the occupancy rate and thus further reducing the council subsidy to the nursery including; effective marketing, reviewing session fees, promoting the nursery to other large employers such as the police, NHS and American Express;***

- ***To review the business model to achieve greater efficiency while building on the nursery's unique city centre location; and***

- ***To consult all Brighton & Hove City Council employees as to the future of the nursery on the basis that access to the nursery is part of the 'Rights and Responsibilities' section of their contracted terms and conditions.***

Proposed by: Cllr Pat Hawkes Seconded by: Cllr Gill Mitchell

Council	Agenda Item 49(a)
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

PETITION REPORT

GREEN GROUP AMENDMENT

BRIGHT START NURSERY

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

Recommendation

2.1 That the petition is referred to the Children & Young People Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration; and

2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People be requested to give consideration to:

a) the high regard with which Bright Start Nursery is held, and the important service it continues to provide, is fully acknowledged,

b) the consultation on closure of Bright Start beng terminated and the scheduled decision on closure is abandoned,

c) a working group is formed, and includes the CYP Cabinet Member, council officers, staff, parents and Ward Members,

d) that the well argued case put forward by parents for making Bright Start viable, and other alternatives to closure, including retention of some subsidy, are seriously and fully explored.

Proposed by: Cllr Pete West Seconded by: Cllr Rachel Fryer

Council	Agenda Item 49(b)
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

PETITION REPORT

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT

ECO-FRIENDLY LIGHTS FOR ST ANN'S WELL GARDENS

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

Recommendation

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

2.2 "That the Cabinet be requested to ensure that the £10,000 already allocated to St Ann's Well Gardens from the S106 funding attached to the Southdown House, Somerhill Avenue development will be spent on these eco-friendly lights 9similar to those in Hove Park). This would ensure safe night time use of the Garden's main entrance and main paths by local residents and parents of the nearby schools."

Proposed by: Cllr Melanie Davis Seconded by: Cllr Gill Mitchell

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answers which will be included in an addendum that will be circulated at the meeting:

(a) Councillor Elgood

"The NLC (NCP) on-street parking enforcement contract includes a clause to allow for a two year extension when it expires please could the Cabinet Member state:

- Has the council undertaken this extension?
- Who made a decision on this and on what date?
- What member involvement did this include?
- What consultation was undertaken with residents to assess their views on potentially extending it?
- What is the total value of any extension?
- When they would be informing residents of this decision?"

Reply from Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment.

"Thank you for your questions about the NSL contract. The council has extended the NSL contract for two years, from January 2011. The NSL contractual period – including the extension option – was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee in November 2006, before the award of the contract. Therefore it was not necessary to seek further approval to implement the option to extend and legal advice confirmed this.

After careful evaluation of NSL's performance and consultation with the Director of Environment, the council extended the contract with NSL in April 2010. The value of the NSL contract is approximately £3.5 million per year. Member involvement and public consultation was not required because the approvals process did not require further specific authority for the implementation of the two year extension, which was referred to in the original Policy and Resources Committee Report."

(b) Councillor Carden

"Following a number of accidents to elderly residents tripping on poor paving, will the council reduce the mismatch for repair from 19mm to 12.5mm to make it safer for them?"

Reply from Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment.

"The standard for pavement repairs is set using National Guidance and all councils endeavour to adhere to a similar level. Brighton and Hove is set to

20mm as the level where repairs are considered and this is a common standard across the South East."

(c) Councillor Carden

"As there still are not enough grit bins in North Portslade will the council provide several more in areas that are not covered?"

Reply from Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment.

"North Portslade had an additional five new grit bins this year making the total in North Portslade to 28. This is a high number compared to some other wards, in recognition of its position as a colder area. However, we must balance the amount of grit bins in the city with what we can sensibly provide for and refill, during severe weather.

This means that we cannot supply an unlimited amount for every street in the city. We looked at all the requests we received over the last year and officers assessed each site, placing bins where they met the criteria, hence the additional bins in your ward.

A map of the grit bins is on our council website so people can find out where their nearest bin is sited."

(d) Councillor Kitcat

"Could the Cabinet Member for Central Services please list which publications the council's media monitoring service surveys and does it include Private Eye which often has stories of relevance to this authority. What is the cost per annum of providing this monitoring service?"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

"The city council no longer monitors print publications using an external provider and stopped doing so at the end of the last financial year as part of its work to seek savings and efficiencies.

However, we now use an agency called Meltwater to monitor online news sources. The cost for 2011/12 will be £3,250, around half the annual cost we were incurring by monitoring print publications. As part of the contract, Meltwater monitors 130,000 online news sources every day (by comparison, the most commonly used free service, Google News, monitors around 4,000 sources). Private Eye's website is one of the 130,000, along with almost all mainstream local, regional and national news media websites in the UK.

Meltwater produces a daily report, including at weekends, which is emailed to 10 licence holders. Licence holders also have access to an online area, where the council can produce its own tailored analysis reports based on any of

numerous available metrics, including tone, audience size and geographical area of coverage.

The licence enables 10 groups of similar search terms to run at any one moment. For example ‘Brighton and Hove City Council’, ‘Brighton and Hove Council’ and ‘Brighton Council’ would all be part of one group. The council can use any of the other nine groups to monitor coverage of any other search item, for example another council, an individual person, an organisation, or a theme, such as ‘severe weather’. Search groups can be amended or replaced at any moment.

The Meltwater service enables the council to monitor and react to public opinion as mediated by the new and traditional media. Furthermore, it enables the council to assess whether its media communications, which are in essence designed to make services as accessible, are effective.”

(e) Councillor Kitcat

“Given, as reported in Private Eye, Vodafone's avoidance of at least £6 billion in UK taxes, will the Cabinet Member responsible make a statement on whether the council will continue to use Vodafone's services noting that, if Vodafone are cheapest, that low price has come at a cost to the tax payer.?”

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

“In line with Council's Value for Money Programme we are already committed to reviewing our contracts, particularly for ICT. This work is in progress and a procurement plan for mobile and telephony services is being developed. Any new contract will be let with due regard to the Council's Procurement Strategy and Codes of Practice.

The Council has been using Vodafone for its mobile phones and Blackberry estate since 2003. At this time there was a wide gap in mobile network coverage between Vodafone with good to excellent coverage and the other suppliers operating in the City with mediocre coverage. As such engaging with any service provider has to be a balance between cost and service, a key factor in the decision to use this particular provider. Many of our mobile devices are used by lone workers visiting clients in their homes or relatively remote locations in parts of the city where coverage from other suppliers is patchy. Vodafone both assures service by making our staff contactable, and supports our Lone Worker policy by assuring these staff a means of contacting colleagues or third party services wherever they may be.

Since engaging Vodafone the Council has reviewed the contract terms on many occasions, meeting with other suppliers and benchmarking against other authorities’ providers and solutions. In addition, we have renegotiated the tariffs on several occasions to take account of what we have found through benchmarking, and the changing needs of the business. As a result savings of up to 66% on voice costs have been made, Blackberry device costs have been

significantly reduced and we have a wider range of tariffs to suit different usage patterns reducing the overall cost of the service.

Independent advice has confirmed that the pricing through the OGC contract framework that Brighton & Hove currently has is extremely favourable compared with other authorities. Taking into account the prohibitive transition costs of moving to another supplier combined with the good service and coverage that Vodafone provide at the moment there is no advantage in changing to another supplier as coverage is likely to be reduced and revenue costs increased.

We remain open to exploring new services and offers from other suppliers, whilst continuing to watch the market closely and benchmarking regularly. The market is developing rapidly and we recognise the need to move with it. We have undertaken trials of alternatives to Blackberry and a review of voice and data service provision for users of mobile devices is currently underway. A summary report of findings and options appraisal will be available before the end of the year."

(f) Councillor Kitcat

"Will the council consider using a free YouTube Partner account to host webcast videos in a low-cost and accessible format for online access – as other councils, including Calgary City Council, are considering?"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

"The Leader's Group is currently reviewing various options for future web casting of Council meetings and I will ensure that your suggestion is fed into that review. However, it is important to note that the Council web cast has recently been upgraded to improve online access. Greater functionality has been added to enable users to embed the web cast on their own site or link directly to it from a range of online and social media channels (Facebook, Digg, StumbleUpon, MySpace, Windows Live, Twitter, Google Bookmark & Browser Favourites). This can be done for the web cast as a whole or individual agenda items."

(g) Councillor Kitcat

"Cllr Mears' previous response to my question; '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?' failed to address the issue of licensing, but instead spoke of data formats and transparency.

I am once again asking the Leader if she will commit the Council to using more permissive terms than straight copyright on the Council's publications and data. This is so that others can remix and reuse the work of this council, paid for by taxpayers, in new and imaginative ways.

Will the Council commit to using an open licence and which one will it use?"

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

"The council is fully supportive of the coalition government's transparency agenda and is actively looking at the newly developed Open Government License. As this is based on the existing Creative Commons license but specifically tailored to be available for cross public sector use, it does look to be the most appropriate choice.

A significant amount of the data that we currently publish through the city's Local Information Service (www.bhlis.org) is provided by our partners. Before committing to the Open Government License we will work with our partners across the city to agree the most appropriate license position."

(h) Councillor Kitcat

"Given the ongoing cold snaps, will the Council administration now agree to implement an ambitious insulation scheme for homes in our city, as proposed by Green Councillors at budget councils in previous years? This would keep residents bills down, homes warm and reduce the city's carbon emissions."

Reply from Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing.

"We already operate a successful insulation scheme in the private sector through the Brighton & Hove Energy Action Partnership having delivered 1346 loft insulation and 1037 cavity wall insulation measures in the private sector since the partnership was established in 2005.

In the council housing stock we have historically invested significantly in insulation & heating, much of this from utility-funded grant programmes. The current SAP Energy Rating of 76.4 puts us in the top quartile of performance in this indicator. We are investing £3.5 million in boiler & heating replacements and upgrades, installing high efficiency condensing boilers and last year we completed 2 insulated overcladding projects to Wiltshire House & Somerset Point and a communal solar hot water system at Hazelholt sheltered scheme, funded 100% by utility company grant monies

Further to those measures above we will be addressing carbon emissions and resident's energy bills through the development of a feed in tariff scheme. The scheme will see the mass installation of solar PV across the council stock and will examine ways to expand these opportunities into the private sector.

The proposals referred to by Cllr. Kitcat would impact on the levels of Council Tax for all residents.

We are seeking to maximise inward investment from external sources such as energy companies that would enable us to continue to deliver targeted insulation measures across both the private and social housing sectors."

(i) Councillor Hamilton

"In October you told me that there were career pathways in some areas of the council, including legal services. In a review situation, where job losses are likely, do you agree that it is important to provide career pathways for all staff, especially those on low grades or with many years of service? This would give staff greater prospects of redeployment within the authority, reduce redundancies, save money, and retain staff that are already familiar with the council and its work culture"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

"It is important that the Council provides opportunities for its employees to develop their skills and knowledge to enhance both their current job performance and future career prospects. The Council also benefits from 'growing its own talent'.

We have learning centres where staff are encouraged to undertake learning activities and skills for life courses to help those who want to develop their numeracy and literacy skills. In addition to this we have set up job shadowing and employee mentoring schemes. Staff are sponsored to undertake professional qualifications.

The council also operates two in-house staffing pools to supply workers for carer and administrative roles. These are designed to provide entry level roles for individuals who can be deployed flexibly, build up knowledge of the organisation and in the case of the care workers receive specialist induction training. Many of these individuals subsequently move into permanent roles with the council.

In situations where jobs are at risk within the council it is particularly important that as a responsible employer we try to mitigate the risk of job losses through redeployment of existing staff to other suitable roles. We have a tried and tested consultation mechanism and redeployment process which has been used successfully in recent years to re-train and retain existing staff."

(j) Councillor Mitchell

"In light of recent government statements that would indicate a rethink of its withdrawal of funding from Schools Sports Partnerships, including the Brighton and Hove Schools Sports Partnership, will the Leader of the Council commit the council to pro-actively working with and maintaining a dialogue with schools, sport leaders and partners in the city to ensure that the expertise, significantly increased participation and enthusiasm for the varied programme of sporting and healthy activities supported by the Partnership to schools across the city is maintained during any changes to the funding regime?"

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

"Brighton and Hove School Sports Partnership is highly regarded. The Strategic Director – People has met with sports leaders from across the City to discuss how its work can best be secured should there be a change in the funding regime. A commitment has been given to look at sports development work across the City, including as part of the review of youth provision, to ensure that all children and young people have access to a wide range of sporting and other forms of health promoting activities both during the school day and out of school hours."

(k) Councillor Kitcat

"What is the pay multiple in Brighton & Hove City Council between the lowest paid and highest paid members of staff."

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

"At the beginning of December the Work Foundation set out the case for a maximum pay multiple that would keep the pay of top executives in the public sector bounded to what their staff earn. This is expressed as a pay multiple or ratio between the lead executive and the lowest paid.

The pay multiple in Brighton and Hove is 13: 1

By comparison, pay for median FTSE 100 CEO executives is 88 times the UK median wage."

(l) Councillor Kitcat

"I refer Councillor Geoffrey Theobald to section 7.4 of the minutes for the City Sustainability Partnership Meeting of 1st November 2010:

"PB inquired after the usage of communal bins and their effect regarding individual responsibility for waste recycling. JJ answered that they were monitoring the levels of recycling in relation to the introduction of communal bins. PB asked if this monitoring was focused solely on the bins in the city centre. JJ replied that this monitoring was focused on both residential and city bins and he stated that there did seem to be a contingent drop in the levels of recycling."

How is it that when I have repeatedly asked the Councillor whether recycling rates are lower in communal bin areas than elsewhere he has said he is unable to answer. Yet here one of our officers is able to report that monitoring shows drops in levels of recycling? Will Cllr Theobald explain himself and report what is being done to remediate the drop in recycling rates that I have long argued was likely to happen in communal bins areas?"

Reply from Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment.

"I have set out below the previous responses that I have given to you nearly two years ago on the matter of recycling rates in the city centre. This situation has not changed. Whilst we do not have the exact figures we estimate that recycling rates are higher in wheelie bin areas and that recycling tonnages in the city centre have always been lower even when we had black bags.

This administration believes in increasing recycling rates both to protect the environment and to reduce costs, as recycling is cheaper than waste disposal. To this end:

(i) We have written to all residents reminding them when their recycling collection day is, and how they can recycle.
(ii) Officers are preparing a communications campaign targeting the city centre in particular early next year.
(iii) Officers will be working with residents on a trial of communal recycling bins later next year to see if that makes it easier for people to recycle and hence increase our recycling rate.

I suggest that you contact Jan Jonker directly so that he can clarify any comments he made in the meeting to which you are referring.

Cabinet Question 1 Dated 15 January 2009
'"Could Councillor Theobald provide, in detail, any arrangements for measuring the levels of waste and recycling collected during and after the introduction of communal bins to the city centre?"

"The introduction of communal bins should keep our city's streets cleaner, because there will not be back sacks on the streets that can be ripped open and rubbish strewn about.

Residents will also be able to put their rubbish out at any time rather than having to keep it in their homes until a certain day.

Communal bins will also save the taxpayers of this city around a million pounds.

Waste and recycling figures are only compiled on city-wide level.

Recycling rounds do not correspond to refuse collection rounds, and neither rounds correspond to ward areas. Collection vehicles for recycling and refuse have different routes meaning any figures recorded on collected tonnages are not directly comparable. Hence it is not possible to draw reliable conclusions about collection variations in particular areas.

The council is able to provide waste and recycling collection levels across the city before and after the introduction of communal bins, but not in specific areas.

Both now and after the introduction of communal bins, the council will continue to provide a weekly recycling service in the city centre, rather than a fortnightly one, recognising that many people have less storage space for recycling in these areas."

Cabinet Question 2 Dated 15 January 2009
"On what Constitutional basis Councillor Theobald could ignore recommendations agreed in September 2007 by the Environment Committee that recycling rates would be measured?"

"As the Leader and Director of Environment explained, we do collect detailed waste and recycling data for the city as a whole, and we are able to identify broadly the impact of wheelie bins. The difficulty is breaking this data down further whilst maintaining its accuracy.

The collection of data by any other area than citywide depends on how the refuse and recycling rounds are configured.

Where the refuse and recycling rounds cover the same area, we can extract data to show the total amount of waste generated by households (refuse and recycling) and the amount recycled (as measured through the tonnage collected on the recycling trucks). As Councillor Mitchell mentioned we were able to produce reasonable quality data to allow a before and after comparison of the impact of wheelie bins in the Preston Park area because the refuse and recycling rounds broadly mapped each other. As the refuse rounds have changed and the recycling rounds are about to change following the build of the Waste Transfer Site and Material Recycling Facility, the extent the refuse and recycling collection areas match each other has reduced considerably making it almost impossible to produce meaningful data on recycling levels on a round by round area. However, we will continue to look at how best to collate and present data on waste as part of our work on the waste strategy and our drive to improve recycling rates and further reduce waste levels.

You have previously raised questions implying that residents with communal bins in the city centre recycle less than other residents. I have replied to you that the small wheelie bins do seem to have had a good impact on recycling levels from the data we have been able to collate (as in the Preston Park area). However, as the Director explained, we do not have accurate data (and we have never claimed to have such data) to show that residents who use the on street communal bins, recycle less or more than residents who use black sacks in the city centre. There are many factors which affect waste and recycling levels, including residents knowing how to access the recycling service. I and the professional officers in my directorate are committed to improving recycling levels and we will be running recycling campaigns later in the year to inform and encourage residents to recycle more. We will happily work with you in your ward to target our communication campaign.

You asked a supplementary stating that Environment Committee on the 13th September 2007 determined that performance data on recycling levels should be recorded both before communal bins are implemented and afterwards. I have carefully looked at the Decision List and cannot find such a conclusion but I may be mistaken. I would be grateful if you can check whether you were correct."

(m) Councillor Meadows

"In Wild Park there is a by-law/highways permission allowing cyclists to ride on the pavement beside the main Lewes Road although there is a perfectly safe cycle lane on the Lewes Road. The police believe it is a by-law so when cyclists use this path without lights they won't enforce it, some council officers believe it is highways permission so they won't remove signage, either way it means that pedestrians have to share a narrow path with cyclists leading to

confrontation and residents almost getting run over. Will the council rescind the by-law or revoke that permission to allow pedestrians to take precedence on this pathway and to ensure that cyclists use the cycle lane provided for them?"

Reply from Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment.

"The footpath alongside Wild Park was designated for shared use from the Home Farm Road junction through to Coldean Lane before Brighton & Hove became a unitary authority. Therefore, the shared use of this path was in place before the Lewes Road cycle lane and remains shared use today.

Children or those who are less confident may feel safer cycling along the pathway. I will suggest that officers consider improvements to this area in light of any funding opportunities safely to accommodate the volume of both pedestrian and cyclist users.

If you consider that there is a significant problem I can arrange for officers to discuss this with the ward councillors."

(n) Councillor Steedman

"The Council's Corporate Procurement Team are not currently able to mandate that all procurement by Council officers goes via central corporate contracts, which offer the efficiencies of bulk purchasing and the opportunity to set minimum standards for product specification, environmental performance, support for local buying, etc. As a result, individual departments or teams can – and do – bypass corporate procurement contracts. Does the Cabinet Member for Central Services believe that this situation represents good value or that it accords with the Council's corporate priority of 'better use of public money'?"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

"Obtaining value for money in all that we do is an important issue for this authority particularly in these current challenging times. As part of Procurement work-stream within the VFM programme there is a review of how officers can engage with Corporate Procurement to ensure that they correctly utilise the corporate agreements that are available. Information is gathered on a regular basis to establish levels of compliance across the organisation and this shows that the majority of relevant council spending does go through the corporate contracts. All significant off-contract spend is investigated to establish the reasons why it takes place and address any service concerns relating to either product availability or quality issues.

For example in the first quarter of 2009/10 one area was shown to be using the corporate stationery contract for only 51% of their stationery spending and they were using 17 different suppliers. Investigations showed that the main reason for this low figure was the use of another supplier for high volume copier paper where there were doubts about the quality of the paper supplied under the corporate contract due to bad experiences in the past. Discussions were held with the corporate supplier, options were suggested and testing was undertaken

that re-assured the client that the paper was fine for the vast majority of their uses. The resultant switch to the corporate contract delivered significant savings. By the third quarter of 2009/10 the area use of the corporate stationery contract had risen to 93% of relevant spending and they were using only 3 different suppliers leading to further savings in invoice processing and supplier management.

Where it is identified that services are not using corporate contracts resulting in a significant failure to achieve value for money and there are no mitigating circumstances then action can and will be taken to block off-contract spending within the financial systems."

(o) Councillor Steedman

"None of the Council's committee reports – including the Council agenda paper in which this question appears – are printed on recycled paper. Does the Cabinet Member for Central Services believe that this is acceptable and that it accords with the Council's corporate priority of 'protecting the environment while growing the economy'?"

Reply from Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services.

"As you will be aware, the Printing and the Procurement Teams have been working together to find a suitable solution to the difficulties that have been experienced when using large amounts of recycled paper in the council's printers and copiers.

Although recycled paper is the council's preferred option, it has been found that the quality of paper purchased is unsuitable where the quantity of printed material produced is substantial, such as in the King's House Print Room. This is because deposits from the recycled paper are left on the printing equipment and particularly on the glass and the council would need to purchase appropriate cleaning products at an additional cost to have them removed.

Whilst I would like to be able to tell you today that higher grade recycled stock has been purchased, such products are very much more expensive and being mindful of severe budget pressures, a change to a higher grade recycled paper in the current economic climate is simply not a viable option.

In the circumstances I feel that the decision to use a keenly priced, non-recycled paper is an acceptable alternative and in terms of reduced paper wastage and cost, it does accord with the council's policy of "protecting the environment while growing the economy".

(p) Councillor Steedman

"We welcome the announcement that the Council is considering how to insulate homes and install renewable energy technologies through the creation of an energy services company. The Birmingham Energy Savers programme, already up and running, uses an innovative 'pay as you save' mechanism to recycle the savings from the energy bills of households that have benefited from insulation and low-carbon technologies, to ensure that the maximum number of houses can be reached, in the private as well as the social housing sector.

Given that the Council has missed its carbon savings target for the local authority area by nearly 50%; that the domestic sector accounts for 42% of Brighton and Hove's carbon emissions; and that there are nearly 14000 households in fuel poverty in the city as we enter another freezing winter at a time of rising fuel bills, will the Cabinet Member for Housing:

a) set out how the Council's housing policies will deliver at least a 42% cut in carbon emissions by 2020 from the domestic sector, and an 80% cut by 2050, as agreed in the Sustainable Community Strategy?
b) ensure that any energy services company scheme targets deprivation and fuel poverty first, and benefits residents living in the private (especially private rented) sector as well as the social rented sector?
c) seek to take advantage of the money available to local authorities for energy efficiency projects under the recently revised rules of the European Energy Recovery programme?
d) commit to a 'pay as you save' mechanism like Birmingham's for Brighton and Hove to ensure that we make our money go as far as possible?
e) join me in meeting the architects of the Birmingham scheme to learn from their experience?"

Reply from Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing.

“Through the Brighton & Hove Energy Action Partnership we operate a comprehensive grant scheme in the private sector. Since the partnership was set up in 2005 it has delivered;

- 2400 insulation measures
- 1481 heating measures
- 141 solar water heating systems (since 2006)

In 2009/10 alone the above scheme through the installation of 800 measures for those at risk of fuel poverty alone saved 650 tonnes of CO2.

In this period we have seen steady reductions in CO2 emissions in Brighton & Hove, achieving an above average reduction compared to the national average. The trend of reduction in the domestic sector in the city is better than the average in both the South East and England as whole.

We will continue to reduce carbon emissions through the continued delivery of home energy efficiency measures and increasing the use of renewables across both the private sector and council housing stock;

A Community Energy Savings Programme scheme will deliver over 10,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide savings and early analysis of a Feed In Tariff (FIT) scheme in Brighton & Hove shows the potential to deliver over 30,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide savings and reduce residences fuel bills.

We already meet our Local Area Indicators on reducing fuel poverty.

We are exploring a range of options to further reduce CO2 emissions and tackle fuel poverty across the city; this would be a major objective of any Energy Services Company (ESCO).

The availability of any EU funding will be considered alongside other investment options when further details are forthcoming.

We will be extending the availability of affordable/recyclable loans for home energy efficiency measures enabling residents to pay for energy efficiency measures at a low borrowing rate whilst saving money on their energy bills."

(q) Councillor Allen

"The announcement that the new owners of Anston House are preparing a plan for a mixed-use development of the whole site is excellent news for the city. Residents of Dyke Road Drive in particular will be delighted to see that the pressure they exerted on the council to sort this problem out has been so successful. Would the Leader of the Council agree with me that it will now be important to give local residents, above all those in Dyke Road Drive whose views of Preston Park will inevitably be affected, every opportunity to influence the plan as it moves forward?"

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

"I am delighted that the owners of the site have commissioned Urban Splash to take forward the development of this site with their preferred d architects. Officers will be meeting with both shortly. In the meantime we have been working proactively with the owners to encourage a realistic high quality vision for the site.

The developers will have to demonstrate that they have consulted local residents but I share your desire to see them and ward councillors fully involved in this process."

(r) Councillor Duncan

"Could Cllr Theobald describe the measures taken to ensure the paths inside and roads surrounding Queen's Park were safe for pedestrian use during the recent cold weather, and reassure residents that adequate resources will be available to ensure park users' safety in any future 'cold snap'?"

Reply from Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment.

"Our Highway Winter Service Plan was agreed at the Cabinet Member Meeting on the 4th November 2010 and it sets our priorities. Our resources are deployed to bring the maximum benefit to the greatest number of people. This means that we treat all A and B roads, most C roads plus all bus routes. We also carry out pavement gritting in main thoroughfares.

In order for the treatments to be effective, they need to be ground in by heavy traffic and footfall so that's why we need to concentrate our resources on these roads and pavements. I am sure you will appreciate that we cannot do every road, pavement and park in the city as this simply wouldn't be feasible. Therefore I'm afraid that Queen's Park cannot be included in any clearance programme although nearby Queen's Park Road and other main roads surrounding this area are gritted."

ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

A period of not more than 30 minutes is set aside for oral questions from Members, at the expiry of which, the Mayor will call a halt and proceed to the next item of business of the agenda. Any Member whose question then remains outstanding will be contacted to determine whether they wish to have a written answer provided or for their question to be carried over to the next meeting.

The following Members have indicated that they wish to put questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairmen of Committees or Members of the Council that have been appointed to an outside body. The Councillor asking the question may then ask one relevant supplementary question which shall be put and answered without discussion:

(a) Councillor Mears
Subject matter – Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

Reply from Councillor Duncan, Council's Appointed Police Authority Representative

(b) Councillor McCaffery
Subject matter – Safety of Children in Care.

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

(c) Councillor Kitcat
Subject matter – Council's Pay Multiple.

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

(d) Councillor Allen
Subject matter – Pride in Preston Park.

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

(e) Councillor Fryer
Subject matter – Bright Start Nursery.

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

(f) Councillor Caulfield
Subject matter – Scrutiny Requests from Members of the Public.

Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.

(g) Councillor Steedman
Subject matter – Fuel Poverty and Council Housing.

Reply from Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing.

(h) Councillor Barnett
Subject matter – Standards Procedure.

Reply from Councillor Oxley, Chairman of the Governance Committee.

(i) Councillor Duncan
Subject matter – Implementation of Notices of Motion.

Reply from Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council.

Council	Agenda Item 56
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS GROUP AMENDMENT

STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY – THREE YEAR REVIEW

To add an additional recommendations 2.2 and 2.3 as shown in bold italics:

RESOLVED:

(1) That the revised Statement of Licensing Policy as amended by the Licensing Committee be approved and adopted;

(2) ***That*** **in adopting the new Licensing Policy, this Council notes the concerns expressed by residents in the zone 1 Special Stress Area, predominately covering Brunswick Town, and agrees to undertake consultation and review of the evidence with a view to the possible inclusion of the area in the Cumulative Impact Area at the earliest possible opportunity.**

Proposed by: Cllr Paul Elgood Seconded by: Cllr David Watkins

Council	Agenda Item 57(a)
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE – BRIGHTON & HOVE

Delete text as struck through below:

"This council places on record its appreciation of the role of NHS Brighton and Hove (the Primary Care Trust) as commissioner of health services in the city and as a strategic partner of the council.

In anticipation of the planned abolition of the PCT the council requests that the Cabinet seeks to encourage and support any initiatives aimed at preserving as much as possible of the experience and expertise of the PCT and its staff~~, thereby reducing the risk that the new GP consortium or consortia will hire in private companies to carry out their commissioning functions.~~"

Proposed by: Cllr Ken Norman Seconded by: Cllr Garry Peltzer Dunn

Council	Agenda Item 57(c)
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT

EXTEND THE CONSULTATION ON BRIGHT START NURSERY AND EFFECTS ITS FUTURE VIABILITY

Insert an additional 5th bullet point in paragraph 8 and an additional 5th bullet point in paragraph 9 as shown below in bold italics:

"This council notes Bright Start is a vibrant city nursery, located in the heart of Brighton. It caters for the children of council employees and those living in the surrounding area. As such, it is a valuable local resource that benefits the wider community.

The nursery is staffed by excellent and loyal professionals who have worked there for many years, offering a steadfast and continuous service that the children enjoy, and their parents and carers implicitly trust.

Bright Start has never been allocated a marketing or advertising budget. As a result many local parents are either not aware of the nursery's existence or believe that it is for council staff only, and thereby not available to them.

It has suffered from cutbacks in the past, and currently receives just £87,000 per year from the Council, as opposed to £200,000+ per year in the past.

The city's birth rate is currently rising. It has been doing so for some years and the 2011 figure for 0-4 year olds is projected to be almost double that of 2001.[1]

The Deputy Prime Minister has pledged to provide nursery places for all vulnerable 2-year-olds.

The council further notes the Conservative administration intends to withdraw funding and close the nursery in April 2011. At a Cabinet meeting on 11 October, and in the presence of a large number of parents and supporters who all called for the nursery to stay open, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People effected a consultation process which is perceived to be the first step towards closure.

This council believes previous efforts to maximise take-up of Bright Start places have been ineffectual and the consultation proposed is totally inadequate. It therefore calls on the Cabinet to recognise that:

- Bright Start nursery is a highly valued local resource available to all pre-school children in the vicinity.

- With effective marketing, Bright Start could attract many more users and be a viable concern.

- Projected figures will place more and more demand on nursery places in future years.

- Failure to consult the wider community on the loss of Bright Start renders the consultation process fundamentally flawed.

- ***The council regrets that the proposal to withdraw the total amount of subsidy from the Bright Start Nursery was published in advance of the formal ending of the consultation process and the proper consideration of its outcome.***

Furthermore council calls on the Cabinet, as part of its consultation process, to consider:

- Identifying all parents of pre-school children within a 500m radius of Bright Start and including them in the consultation.

- Ensuring, before any decision is taken on the nursery's future, that all those who are eligible to use the nursery are aware a) of its existence and b) their eligibility to use it.

- Ensuring that consultation on the future of Bright Start and the possible withdrawal of a staff benefit is extended to all Brighton and Hove City Council employees, not just those who use the nursery.

- Undertaking to take the results of the consultation into account and especially, if a majority of those consulted express a desire for Bright Start to remain open.

- ***Bringing a detailed report to the Children and Young People Cabinet Member Meeting on the 17th January 2011 setting out how the proposals in this Notice of Motion will be taken forward along with options for the future running of Bright Start as a viable city centre children's nursery."***

Proposed by Cllr Pat Hawkes Seconded by Cllr Gill Mitchell

Council	Agenda Item 57(d)
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

GREEN GROUP

Amendment to the wording in the final paragraph with text shown in bold italics to replace the text which is struck through.

PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR RENTS

"This council notes many employees in the public and private sectors in Brighton and Hove are facing very low wage increases, pay freezes or, in some cases, wage cuts as an alternative to unemployment.

It also notes that, according to the council's latest *Housing Costs Update (November 2011*), private sector rents in the city for homes in the greatest demand – two-bedroom flats and houses – have risen by 22 per cent and 10.9 per cent between September 2009 and June 2010; the rents of studio flats rose by 12.4 per cent during the same period.

It also notes that, with the exception of rooms and studio flats, the local housing allowance is now less than lower quartile rents which could reduce the chances of those on benefits finding an affordable home (*Housing Costs Update, November 2011).*

It also notes that these rent rises have a widespread impact in Brighton and Hove where 22 per cent of all households live in the private rented sector (twice the national average) and where home ownership is beyond the pocket of many of those renting in the city where the average 1 bedroom flat costs more than 5½ times the median household annual income, 3-bedroom houses cost more than 10 times median annual income and deposits of 25 per cent are required (*Housing Costs Update, November 2011).*

Therefore, in circumstances where the combination of Housing Benefit cuts and rent increases will lead to increased hardship and homelessness in the city, this council:

Calls on the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Minister for Housing, urging them to ~~introduce~~ ***set up a commission to examine*** private rented sector rent ~~freeze~~ ***capping, regulation, and other measures to reduce the cost of rented homes*** and ***to*** reconsider their Housing Benefit proposals."

Proposed by: Cllr Bill Randall Seconded by: Cllr Rachel Fryer

Supported by: Cllrs Kennedy, Deane, Wrighton, Wakefield-Jarrett, Steedman, Duncan, Kitcat, Davey, Rufus, West and Phillips.

NOTICE OF MOTION

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT

PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR RENTS

To add a final paragraph at the end of the motion as shown in bold italics:

"This council notes many employees in the public and private sectors in Brighton and Hove are facing very low wage increases, pay freezes or, in some cases, wage cuts as an alternative to unemployment.

It also notes that, according to the council's latest *Housing Costs Update (November 2011*), private sector rents in the city for homes in the greatest demand – two-bedroom flats and houses – have risen by 22 per cent and 10.9 per cent between September 2009 and June 2010; the rents of studio flats rose by 12.4 per cent during the same period.

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Therefore, in circumstances where the combination of Housing Benefit cuts and rent increases will lead to increased hardship and homelessness in the city, this council:

Calls on the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Minister for Housing, urging them to set up a commission to examine private rented sector rent capping, regulation, and other measures to reduce the cost of rented homes and to reconsider their Housing Benefit proposals; ***and***

As a matter of urgency requests that officers report back to the Cabinet on:

(i) ways that relevant council departments can work together with other partners, including private sector landlords, to develop plans to

understand who will be most affected by the LHA changes and to mitigate the impact of those changes on claimants; and

(ii) possible protocols to prioritise the use of Discretionary Housing Payments to prevent homelessness.

Proposed by: Cllr Christine Simpson Seconded by: Cllr Anne Meadows