

Place Overview & Scrutiny

Date: **16 July 2025**

Time: **4.00pm**

Venue **Hove Town Hall Council Chamber**

Members: **Councillors:** Evans (Chair), Cattell, Loughran, Goddard, Fowler, Mackey, Winder, Fishleigh, Sykes and Meadows

Co-optees

Mary Davies (Older People's Council) and Mark Strong (CVS)

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AGENDA

PART ONE

Page

11 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

- (a) **Declaration of Substitutes:** Where Councillors are unable to attend a meeting, a substitute Member from the same Political Group may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting.
- (b) **Declarations of Interest:**
 - (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests;
 - (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
 - (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare:

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the committee lawyer or administrator preferably before the meeting.

- (c) **Exclusion of Press and Public:** To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: *Any item appearing in Part Two of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.*

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls and on-line in the Constitution at part 7.1.

12 MINUTES

7 - 24

- 40.1(a) To approve the minutes of the previous Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25th March 2025
- 40.1(b) To approve the minutes of the Call-in meeting held on 19th May 2025 (Part One and Part Two)
- 40.1(c) To approve the minutes of the Special meeting held on 5th June

40.1 (d) To approve the minutes of the Special meeting held on 1st July

13 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

14 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To consider the following items raised by members of the public:

- (a) **Petitions:** To receive any petitions presented by members of the public to the full Council or to the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions:** To receive any questions submitted by the due date of 10am on 7th July 2025
- (c) **Deputations:** To receive any deputations submitted by the due date of 10am on 7th July 2025

15 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

To consider the following matters raised by Members:

- (a) **Petitions:** To receive any petitions submitted to the full Council or to the meeting itself.
- (b) **Written Questions:** A list of written questions submitted by Members has been included in the agenda papers (copy attached).
- (c) **Letters:** To consider any letters submitted by Members.
- (d) **Notices of Motion:** To consider any Notices of Motion.

16 CITY PLAN UPDATE

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Contact Officer: Natalie Sacks-Hammond
Ward Affected: All Wards

17 INTRODUCTION TO THE HERITAGE STRATEGY - VERBAL PRESENTATION

18 TASK & FINISH GROUP - DISCUSSION

PART TWO

19 PART TWO MINUTES

35 - 38

20 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

To consider whether the items listed in Part Two of the agenda and decisions thereon should remain exempt from disclosure to the press and public.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Anthony Soyinka, (email Natalie.Sacks-Hammond@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.00pm 25 MARCH 2025

HOVE TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair) Cattell (Deputy Chair), Fowler, Lyons, Sheard, Sykes, Thomson, Winder, Grimshaw and Earthey

Other Members present: Councillors

PART ONE

38 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1 Procedural Business

1 a Declarations of substitutions

1.1 Cllr Grimshaw is substituting for Cllr Hewitt

1.2 Cllr Earthey is substituting for Cllr Fishleigh

1b Declarations of interest:

1.2 There were none.

1c Exclusion of the press and public

1.3 There are no Part Two items today, so the press and public won't be excluded.

39 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

39.1 The Chair gave the following communication:

Today we have two items on the agenda.

We will be looking at the draft outdoor events strategy to inform further development before it goes to Cabinet in May. The strategy sets out the council's policies and approaches for securing, delivering, managing and supporting a diverse range of outdoor events across the city, which are important for the city's economy.

Secondly, I will present the report of the Task and Finish Group that has been running since October looking into the issue of Short Term Lets in the city. We will go through the findings and recommendations that have been formed by the members of the Task and Finish Group. The committee is being asked to refer the recommendations to Cabinet for consideration. Some members of the Task and Finish Group are not members of Place Committee so we have invited them to join the meeting for this agenda item. They are welcome to contribute to the discussion if they wish but if we are required to vote, please note that this will just be for the voting members of Place committee.

40 MINUTES

40 There were two sets of minutes for approval:

- Place Overview & Scrutiny Meeting 21st January 2025: minutes were approved by members
- Special Place Overview & Scrutiny Meeting 7th February 2025: minutes were approved by members

41 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

4.1 Catherine Lane, a local resident and owner of “My holiday let” presented her deputation as follows:

Dear Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to address you today following my review of the Short Term Let report, which I found to be comprehensive and balanced. However, I wish to raise two concerns that I believe warrant your attention.

Firstly, concerning the definition of short-term lets, the report distinguishes these as properties that are not classified as main residences that are let out for brief periods. However, most cases of Short Term Lets are let on this basis and estate agents are actively suggesting this is how people can circumvent any planning rules. For instance there are many four and five-bedroom properties in Kemptown, that operate solely on weekends and accommodate up to 20 guests. These properties assert that they are their owners' main residences to circumvent paying business rates, reduce capital gains tax on a sale and potentially so they can get cheaper finance on these properties. In Brunswick Square although all properties would qualify for small business rates relief there are only three properties listed as holiday lets at the valuation office and I know of about 50 such properties.

The law stipulates that if a property is let out—whether as a main residence or otherwise—there are business operational standards that must be adhered to, including fire precautions and insurance liabilities. I urge that any recommendations encompass all properties advertised for short-term lets, irrespective of their claimed status as main residences.

Secondly, I take issue with the recommendation to lobby for no permitted development rights. This approach appears inequitable, particularly for those of us who have operated lawfully for many years. It is unreasonable to equate established operators, who may have been in business for up to 20 years and would qualify for a certificate of lawfulness after over 10 years of trading, with new entrants who may begin operations tomorrow. The need for existing businesses to secure bookings often two years in advance highlights the importance of recognising our long-standing compliance with the law.

Thank you for considering these points, and for your time today.

4.2 Cllr Evans gave the following response to the deputation:

Thank you for your deputation, Catherine. I'll address each point separately.

The definition used in the report is the one the Task & Finish Group is working to, rather than the council's official definition. With limited time available to us, we wanted to focus on properties clearly operating as businesses rather than those being occasionally let to guests. However, I acknowledge your point that the distinction between short-term let businesses and individuals earning extra income is not always clear. You are correct that the law does not differentiate between these properties in terms of safety standards and fire regulations—all guest accommodations must comply, and we are aware that there are some who, whether knowingly or not, are in breach of current legislation, even without any new rules coming down the track. If a registration or licensing scheme were introduced, the definition would be reviewed and determined by central government.

Regarding your second point, my understanding is that any legal change involving a change of use without permitted development rights cannot be applied retrospectively. Instead, it would focus on regulating the future expansion of short-term lets in areas where their concentration is already high. Existing properties would not be affected by the change, particularly in the case of responsible owners like yourself, already complying with all current legislation.

The Task & Finish Group recognises STLs as valuable to the city's economy, but we are concerned that in certain areas, the high numbers are causing issues, and may additionally have an impact on housing supply and cost. Lobbying for the removal of permitted development rights would give the council the authority to manage STL numbers in these areas, helping to mitigate their negative impact on the local community, and potentially helping to ensure that certain areas don't become so saturated that we create the worst of all possible worlds – ie, that not only is community cohesion damaged, but that we are **over**-supplying the tourist market, with short-term let properties (that could be housing residents) lying empty for much of the time.

42 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

5.1 There were no member questions.

43 BRIGHTON & HOVE EVENTS STRATEGY PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

43 Brighton & Hove Events Strategy pre-decision scrutiny

43.1 Cllr Miller, cabinet member for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, presented the report to the committee. Key points included the priority areas to develop such as improving community ownership of events, being more inclusive, protecting the natural environment and generating over £1m in revenue. The report explained how they plan to engage with the community through in person forums and using the Your Voice digital platform and it detailed the forward plan with a timeline.

43.2 Mark Strong of the Community Voluntary Sector asked questions about benchmarking with other cities, engaging with community groups to see how they are affected, particularly

access issues, citing fences in Madeira Drive during the marathon and hoarding walls that were erected around St Peter's Church. Mark Strong asked whether the 28 days included setting up and breaking down before and after the event itself. Ian Baird, Outdoor Events Development Manager, said that the 28 days allows for use of the space for that commercial purpose and does not include full build and break. He said that mitigations will be put in place to help with access issues and will be informed by equality impact assessments.

43.4 Mary Davies, Chair of the Older Peoples' Council, raised issues regarding physical access, public seating, buses, public toilets and ensuring events viewing areas are not standing only. There are accessibility issues during the marathon where residents cannot get to the seafront. Cllr Miller said that negative impacts cannot be completely removed for all events but they can be reduced, such as access issues only being in place for as short a time as possible. There are positive impacts that are not always obvious such as revenue being used to fund public toilets and subsidising smaller events.

43.5 Members asked questions about revenue generation, consultation with residents, the charges for event organisers and whether they could be increased, ground repair following events in green spaces, to consider tree roots when planning events so they are not damaged, to communicate the planned improvements out to residents, whether events can be mapped to their particular areas, the banning of sky litter and what happens if this is breached, and accessibility when large scale citywide events are taking place that can cut off parts of the city and make some areas inaccessible. With current fines for contract breaches at only £100, a suggestion was put forward to raise this.

43.6 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee resolved to note the report

44 REPORT OF SHORT TERM LETS TASK & FINISH GROUP

44. Report of Short Term Lets Task & Finish Group

44.1 Cllr Evans presented the report of the Short Term Lets Task & Finish Group, commenting on the knowledge of the group and opinions on how best to manage the growth of short term lets, between the need for tourist provision, with all the jobs and income the hospitality industry provides, and the need for answers to the housing shortage, pockets of anti-social-behaviour, and dwindling sense of social cohesion in some over saturated areas. She referred to the different council officers from around the UK who spoke to the group and their preferences for regulation, and that two government departments are currently working on this issue. The finished report, once passed by Place OSC, would be sent to both departments and to Rachael Maskell MP, all of whom had requested copies. She summarised the issues of rogue operators who are not adhering to the law, whether intentional or not, and the disparity this causes with professional, good owners like Catherine Lane who presented the deputation. Cllr Evans ended by thanking everyone who had taken part in the Task & Finish Group.

44.2 Members were positive about the report and in agreement about the need for regulation of short term lets and had a discussion around the recommendations put forward. Points raised included the need to lobby for a new use class that must remove permitted development rights since the property needs to be treated differently to a residence and controlled by Planning; whether a voluntary register would be worthwhile; whether Brighton and Hove could follow Blackpool's example of using the "sui generis" use class; whether current buy-to-let properties

could migrate to being short term lets; whether enforcement could be taken in collaboration with HMRC through reporting rogue operators; and the effect of empty homes on the city.

44.3 Cllr Pickett asked about how the recommendations will be monitored to ensure that progress is made. The report will go to cabinet in May to consider the recommendations and it will be the responsibility of Place O&S Committee to monitor. We would expect an update report in a few months' time.

44.4 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee resolved to note the report, agree the recommendations and to refer them to cabinet.

The meeting concluded at 6.23pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

1.00pm 19 MAY 2025

HOVE TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair) Cattell (Deputy Chair), Fishleigh, Fowler, Lyons, Sheard, Sykes, Winder and Grimshaw

Co-Optees present: Mark Strong (CVS), Doug Thomson (Older People's Council)

PART ONE

45 MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

45.1 The chair answered the question as follows: Thank you to Cllr De Oliveira for his question. Public trust and transparency are incredibly important, and I think amongst the main reasons that we are having this call-in, so I am grateful to him for raising this. However, as this question is directed at cabinet, it is not for me as Chair of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee to say how cabinet will do anything. The relevant cabinet member, Cllr Jacob Taylor, is here today and has agreed to answer Cllr De Oliveira's question.

Cllr Taylor said: Thank you Cllr De Oliveira for submitting the question. A lot of the substance will be answered in the presentation. I agree that these are the assets of the city council and therefore the people of Brighton & Hove and have been acquired and held over many years. As Councillors we are stewards of these assets. I take that, cabinet takes that, and the whole council takes that extremely seriously. When considering our assets, the use of assets and how we can unlock sites for housing, we have to consider those issues very carefully and also balancing it with the financial needs of the council. In terms of trust and transparency, the process that was gone through has followed the constitution, which is that the report went to cabinet where there was a distinction between part one and part two which we will explore and now the decision is being called-in where it will be further scrutinised, and those are the processes for ensuring that decisions are made properly and are transparent. There is a balancing act on what is included in part one and part two reports and I've no doubt that members will have questions on that today.

46 CAPITAL ASSET STRATEGY

46.1 Cllr O'Quinn presented to the committee. The main points of the presentation were: Grounds for call-in were that there may not have been sufficient evidence to make the decision, and may not have been sufficient consultation made with stakeholders; Without knowing the additional details in part 2 papers of the cabinet meeting it is not possible to know the level of information and if that was enough for the decision to be made. Those making the

call-in felt that some of the strategic decisions could have more details and more consultation including with cabinet members. Cllr O'Quinn said she would like to see more checks and balances to protect officers of any accusations of wrongdoing. She also felt that there was a real need to consult widely.

46.2 Cllr Taylor presented to the committee. His main points were: that there is an unbelievable lack of land available for housing in the city; the city was in a housing crisis that is creating problems with affordability, fewer pupils in schools, thousands on housing waiting lists, and street sleeping; the high cost of construction; the need to set a balanced budget; the Council's low levels of reserves; the need to consider the best use of land and its use for housing; the consequences of not getting capital receipts, which would be cuts to services; the guiding principles of the council, being housing first

46.3 The committee questioned the cabinet member. Questions and comments included: modelling of future site usage and potential future value; involvement of councillors; modelling of outcomes of decisions; concerns around the future of particular sites in part 1; why certain details are in part 2, such as the names of the properties; why the council can't develop sites; if the council is confident that it will get market rate for the sites; what oversight there is to ensure valuations are really independent; future proofing for potential future use; if there would be equality impact assessments carried out; if community use could be considered for certain sites; concerns around if the market value was correct if selling to a current tenant; yields from certain properties might be higher on the open market; the involvement of planning in discussions so far; if independent valuations were independent of both the council and the agent selling the land; the need for public involvement; the possibility of covenants to restrict future use or sell on clauses.

46.4 Members agreed to go into confidential session to discuss the part 2 report.

46.5 The committee returned to public session, with Cllr Cattell chairing as Cllr Evans had to leave during the confidential session.

46.6 **Resolved-**

That the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee agrees to determine that the challenge to the decision called-in should be taken no further and the decision may be implemented

The meeting concluded at 3.53pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.00pm 5 JUNE 2025

HOVE TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair) Fishleigh, Winder, Goddard, Mackey, Loughran, Meadows, Asaduzzaman, Parrott and Pickett

Other Members present: Mark Strong (CVS)

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1 Procedural Business

1 a Declarations of substitutions

- 1.1 Cllr Parrott is substituting for Cllr Cattell
- 1.2 Cllr Asaduzzaman is substituting for Cllr Fowler
- 1.3 Cllr Pickett is substituting for Cllr Sykes
- 1.4 Mary Davies, Co-optee for the Older Peoples' Council is unable to attend today so we have invited Doug Thompson, another OPC rep, to ensure that older peoples' concerns are heard at the meeting.

1b Declarations of interest:

1.2 There were none.

1c Exclusion of the press and public

1.3 There are no Part Two items today, so the press and public won't be excluded.

2 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Chair gave the following communication:

Today we are holding a special Place Overview & Scrutiny meeting to look at the ongoing programmes of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation for Sussex and Brighton. As this subject has an overlap in remit, we have invited members of People Overview & Scrutiny Committee to attend and provide input if they wish to.

We are being asked to note the update to members on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation and to comment on the plans for both programmes. Any comments will be considered ahead of the Cabinet meeting in June where this will be presented.

We are joined by Cllr John Hewitt, Cabinet advisor on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation who will be presenting today. We also have with us Alex Voce, Head of the Cabinet Office, and Liz Culbert, Director for Governance and Law, who are on hand to help with any questions. We also have online Lucie Spicer from the Policy Team and two consultants, Julian Osgathorpe and James Stainer. I'd like to welcome them all to the meeting.

Although we only have one item on the agenda, there are a lot of us here this afternoon and so we will have a lot of questions to get through. Can I therefore please request that both those asking and answering questions are as brief and to the point as possible, as we want everyone who wishes to contribute to have the opportunity. So, I'd just like to remind members here that while I'm sure all questions on the timelines and processes involved in the devolution and Local Government Reorganisation pathways will be welcomed and answered by our various experts as clearly as they are able – I certainly hope so, as I don't think I'm the only one who is confounded by the dizzying speed at which the many and varied threads of all these related changes are proposed to unfold, and I hope to understand it all more clearly by the end of this meeting! – we are not here to try and make or re-make any decisions already taken. We are already on the pathway to both LGR and Sussex wide devolution, and while we are entitled to question and give opinions on the detail of the next steps to be taken, it would be a waste of our own and others' time to be questioning that they will be.

3 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

4.1 There were no public questions.

4 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

5.1 There were no member questions.

5 DEVOLUTION

5.1 Cllr Hewitt, Cabinet Adviser for Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) presented the slides to the committee. He explained the difference between Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation and presented the process and timelines for authorities in the priority programme for Devolution. In relation to LGR, Cllr Hewitt talked through the council's proposal that suggests the creation of 5 unitary authorities across Sussex with Brighton & Hove using its existing footprint or growing to form one of these authorities. Cllr Hewitt said that the government had recently clarified that the 500,000 population figure is a guiding principle and not a strict target. Cllr Hewitt presented the governments' feedback on the interim plan, which encouraged the council to go further when collaborating with the neighbouring councils in terms of data sharing and evidence building. There will be a period of consultation starting next month with targeted promotion within the community. The completed plan needs to be submitted by 26th September.

5.2 Cllrs Fishleigh, O'Quinn and Pickett asked questions about costs including startup costs, the amount Brighton & Hove will receive from central government and how much has

the council already budgeted for. Cllr Sankey said that the published figure is £7.5m for the 21 areas in the priority programme, of which £302,000 is allocated to Brighton & Hove and East Sussex for the first phase. Councils will need to pay for the second phase through efficiencies or via Capital Receipts. There are no plans to raise council tax for this purpose and predicted costs are low. Once the Mayoral Strategic Authority is established in 2026, it will have its own budget and there will be no ongoing costs to Brighton & Hove.

- 5.3 Cllr Mcleay asked a question about the motivation to expand the boundaries to the east of the city to help with the issue of housing since areas such as Saltdean and Telscombe are already very developed; what opportunities are there bearing in mind the need for green space. Cllr Sankey said that the government is pushing for greater efficiencies and there are benefits to looking at the current boundaries, such as the arbitrary boundary line that runs through Saltdean. This is motivated by creating efficiencies, economic growth, housing supply, the need for more industrial space and a whole range of things to consider how the city can drive progress for the region and where those boundaries make the most sense. The next stage in this process is to share data with neighbouring authorities to understand what could be delivered and use this to inform the proposal.
- 5.4 Mark Strong of the Community Voluntary Sector said that his sector would like to be more engaged and that their voices need to be embedded into the process. He mentioned the idea of creating Neighbourhood Area Committees lead by the ward councillor with community reps as members. Cllr Sankey said that the Ignite consultants are leading on the LGR consultation and have identified community groups to reach out to.
- 5.5 Cllrs O'Quinn, Shanks, Loughran and People O&S committee co-optees Sara Fulford and Anusree Biswas Sasi asked questions about the LGR consultation; expressing the importance of having different groups to consult with across the city but needing to reach rural areas too, the methods being used for the consultation and to ensure they are not too technocratic, how and when it will take place considering the short timescale and concerns around it being rushed; that they need to engage with district councils like Lewes to bring them on board, and the importance of accessibility when explaining something very complex to the general public, using examples of the impacts would be helpful. Cllr Sankey said that the aim is to publish the consultation next month.
- 5.6 Cllrs Shanks and Meadows raised concerns around the proposal of having 5 unitary authorities and whether that would result in fewer councillors, leading to less representation for residents, whether this had been discussed with the neighbouring councils and what their opinion is, citing that West Sussex County Council wants 3 unitary authorities, and raising a concern that LGR wouldn't save money but would create a duplication of back office functions. Cllr Hewitt explained that if there are 5 unitary authorities there would be 10 representatives at the table with the mayor, which is more democratic, diverse, and accurately reflect the views and needs of all areas within Sussex.
- 5.7 There was a concern that Devolution was just creating another tier of governance that would dictate what the unitary authorities must do. It was explained that the Mayoral Strategic Authority would take on devolved powers from central government so that

these decisions were being made locally and not by Westminster. East and West Sussex County Council footprints will be divided into unitary authorities but as Brighton & Hove already is one, it will continue as it is, remaining operationally responsible for its services.

- 5.8 Cllr Evans asked a question about the shadow unitary authorities, the timing of local elections across Sussex and the fact that LGR will not be complete until after the new Mayoral Strategic Authority has been formed, questioning who will be part of it initially and how their role would be legitimised. Cllr Sankey said that the elections for East and West Sussex have been postponed by one year, the mayor would be directly elected in 2026 and there will be interim arrangements with 2 representatives from each upper-tier authority and the mayor. It is likely that there will be one year where it will be a shadow authority while the set up process is being completed. There could be additional non-constituent members, such as potentially the South Downs National Park, fire service, NHS etc who may be involved with decision making to help legitimise the interim arrangements.
- 5.9 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting concluded at 6.53pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.00pm 1 JULY 2025

HOVE TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair) Cattell, Loughran, Goddard, Fowler, Winder, Fishleigh, Sykes, Meadows and Asaduzzaman

Other Members present: Councillors Shanks, Sheard and McLeay (People O&S committee guests), Angela Stretton Older People's Council.

PART ONE

6 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

6 Procedural Business

6 (a) Declarations of substitutions

6.1 Mary Davies, Co-optee for the Older Peoples' Council was unable to attend, so the Chair invited Angela Stretton, from the Older People's Council (OPC) to attend the meeting as a guest to ensure that the views of older people were represented.

6.2 Apologies were received from Mark Strong, CVS co-optee

6.3 Cllr Asaduzzaman attended as substitute for Cllr Mackey

6 (b) Declarations of interest:

6.4 Cllr Loughran declared that she is a trustee for Seaside Community Homes, which owns some leasehold properties in the LPS Blocks. Siobhan Fry (legal services) noted that the report would not focus on seaside homes, and was for discussion rather than decision, so there was no need for Cllr Loughran to be excluded from debate.

6 (c) Exclusion of the press and public

6.5 **RESOLVED** – that the press & public be not excluded from the meeting.

7 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 The Chair gave the following communication:

Today we are holding a special Place Overview & Scrutiny meeting to look at the appraisal options for the large panel system (LPS) blocks that require action after structural surveys concluded that they do not meet current safety standards. As this subject has an overlap in remit, I have invited members of People Overview & Scrutiny Committee to attend and provide input if they wish to.

We are being asked to note the appraisal options report on the LPS Blocks and to make comments or recommendations on these proposals to Cabinet.

We are joined by Councillor Gill Williams, Cabinet member for Housing, who will be presenting this item. We also have with us, Darren Levy, Interim Director for Housing Regeneration, supported by officers from the Directorate of Homes and Adult Social Care: Genette Laws, Martin Reid, Harry Williams, Sam Smith, Laura Webster and Siobhan Fry, who are on hand to help with any questions.

Although we only have one item on the agenda, there are a lot of us here this afternoon and so we will have a lot of questions to get through. Can I therefore please request that both those asking and answering questions are as brief and to the point as possible, as we want everyone who wishes to contribute to have the opportunity to do so.

8 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

8.1 There were no public questions.

9 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

9.1 There were no member questions.

10 LARGE PANEL SYSTEMS PROGRAMME - OPTIONS APPRAISAL AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing, presented the report to the committee. She explained that the LPS blocks are not sustainable in their current condition and that “do nothing” is not an option. The council had lobbied the government for funding to help with the costs of remediation however have been informed that no funding is available. Cllr Williams spoke about the different ways the council has engaged with the residents to date and its plans to continue engagement throughout the process. Darren Levy, Interim Director for Housing Regeneration, explained the three options that had been investigated for the LPS blocks and that strengthening or strengthening with refurbishment would only provide an additional 20 year lifespan with substantial additional costs. Current predicted costs would amount to two thirds of the Council’s 5 year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital funding for stock investment, which makes these options unaffordable. The recommended option is for regeneration of the sites which would mean the blocks would be demolished. This will provide an opportunity to transform the areas and deliver more homes.

10.2 Councillors Loughran and McLeay asked if the new build for these sites would increase the supply of social housing and whether the new homes would be exclusively for this purpose. Councillor Williams said the aim was to increase the number of social homes but that some of the new build may be multi tenure. There is a lack of 3 bed+ houses in

the city so the new builds would take this into consideration and would better meet the needs of the community. There is also an opportunity to provide more homes that are suitable for people with disabilities. There were subsequent questions about the master plan for North Whitehawk and what it would deliver. Darren Levy said that the plan would be co-produced with residents. It will be more than just housing; they would like to introduce play areas, green spaces, work spaces, local amenities and bring jobs into the area. Councillor Shanks asked if a new secondary school could be considered for Whitehawk. Angela Stretton (OPC) requested and received reassurance that the plans will meet the needs of older people, for example by providing seating in the new outdoor areas. Councillor Winder said they need to bring people with them and do visible things like tree planting and providing green spaces. Councillor Williams said it is an opportunity to transform the area with beautiful buildings and surroundings, making it a place for people to thrive in.

- 10.3 Councillors Fowler and McLeay raised concerns from residents who have expressed that they love living where they do, they have beautiful views and a close community and are worried about ending up somewhere dark and dingy away from the area and their friends. Some residents have reported having sleepless nights about it. Councillor Williams acknowledged that this is distressing for residents. They will be treated with compassion and care, with individual visits to each home to assess their needs for relocation and that where possible, people who wish to stay in the same area will be rehoused locally. Councillor McLeay reported that council tenants are concerned about the cost of moving and the logistics and that leaseholders are worried about the significant increase in property prices and not being able to afford to stay in the city. Councillor Williams assured them that all tenants will have help throughout the process; they will offer tailored support, a single point of contact from a dedicated engagement team; they will be offered like for like in relation to their current housing and the council will continue to buy back properties from leaseholders at rates that mean they will not be disadvantaged.
- 10.4 Councillor Meadows asked about leaseholders whose mortgages and insurances are now invalid because the condemned blocks have no value. They can only sell to the council, which is a large cost pressure for the council who are offering to pay for the cost of an independent valuation, £500 + VAT, 10% uplift on the purchase cost, stamp duty, mortgage redemption fees, repayment of Right to Buy discount, removal costs etc and whether £43m would be enough to cover this. She asked what advice is being given to tenants on their contents insurance. Martin Reid said they would respond to the question about contents insurance in writing following the committee.
- 10.5 There were further questions about how the project would be financed. There are several options being looked into including: the new Affordable Homes Programme (more details coming in September), liaising with Homes England, the joint venture with Hyde Homes, looking into Brownfield infrastructure levy funding, and talking to potential funders, taking advice from other Local Authorities who have been in the same situation. Martin Reid said that no money had been diverted from the existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for stock investment, and he went on to explain how this is broken down into specific funding pots. The HRA covers all main requirements but there is still the need to look in to forward funding for the regeneration and renewal of the LPS blocks which is not from the HRA.

- 10.6 Councillor Cattell asked about people who are currently on the housing waiting list. Harry Williams said there would be several hundred households joining the housing register which will have a significant impact unless it is managed carefully. There are some new developments coming up in the city which could house some of these people and help offset the waiting list. People waiting for homes with 3 + bedrooms are having to wait in excess of 8 years so they are hoping to increase the supply of these homes in the longer term to meet the needs of those in the city.
- 10.7 Councillor Sheard asked specifically about the offer to private sector tenants and whether they are covered by the right to return policy. Darren Levy explained the right to return policy will be a core principle within the proposed offer for secure tenants. Harry Williams said that private sector tenants can access help from the council's homelessness service and the dedicated team for support and that secure tenants are prioritised and have access to different benefits. Councillor Sheard said that it seemed harsh to signpost private sector tenants into the homelessness system when they are being evicted through no fault of their own, they have paid their rent and done everything by the book and the council has made them homeless. They also need help to find alternative accommodation. Darren Levy acknowledged this and said he will re-look at it as part of the approach to the re-housing policy.
- 10.8 Councillors Fowler, Meadows, McLeay and Fishleigh asked about timelines. Darren Levy said that there will be a phased approach beginning with St James' House where they are aiming to start the rehousing process in January 2026, with the blocks in Hollingdean starting by the end of 2026 and North Whitehawk in 2027. The design phase and procurement will take 4 – 6 months, they should be on site at St James' House within 3 years depending on the rehousing programme, so from start to finish it will take 5 years in total. The Hollingdean blocks will take around 6 years in total, and the Whitehawk master plan will be around 7 years. They need to start acting now and will be producing planning applications as soon as possible. Councillor Meadows warned that things do slip and there may be an increase in the cost of labour and materials. She asked about putting resident feedback into the development of the City Plan. Sam Smith said the project was aligning with the renewal of City Plan and looking at wider place making.
- 10.9 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting concluded at 5.45pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

Brighton & Hove City Council

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 16

Subject: City Plan Update

Date of meeting: 16th July 2025

Report of: Chair of Place Overview & Scrutiny

Contact Officer: Name: Corporate Director- Operations

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Key Decision: No

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 At the October meeting of Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee, members approved the recommendation to keep the City Plan review on the work plan for future opportunities to scrutinise the work as it progresses. This report will update the committee on the initial consultation that was held from November 2024 – January 2025 on the new City Plan, along with the next steps in the process. Before the new city plan can be adopted it must go through several stages of engagement in accordance with statutory requirements and regulations.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes the work that has been done to date on the City Plan review.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 The current City Plan sets out a framework of planning policies to guide future development in the city to 2030. It identifies how much new housing and commercial space will be needed to help meet the needs of the city's residents and businesses.
- 3.2 This document refers to City Plan Part One that was adopted in 2016 and now needs updating. City Plan Part Two was adopted in 2022 and there will be a review of any policies that are considered outdated or no longer compliant with more recent national guidance. The current City Plan Part One sets out the Council's overall approach and the amount of new development required across the city to 2030. It sets out the broad locations and Development Areas where significant development will take place and includes strategic site allocations and key city wide policies to guide development. The new City Plan Part One will guide future development in

the city to 2041 and needs to be prepared in consultation with statutory consultees, the local community and other interested parties.

- 3.3 The Key Issues consultation is the first stage of public engagement, which took place from November 2024 – January 2025 looking at topic areas such as “Homes for Everyone”, “Culture and Tourism” and “Biodiversity”. There were 531 responses to the survey, 33 events were held, 6 workshops took place in schools and 200 young people completed a separate youth survey. The proportion of responses from minority groups was broadly in line with Census 2021.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 contains further details on the consultation, lessons learned, key outcomes and the next steps. There will be further consultations on the development of the City Plan with draft policies scheduled for consultation in the summer of 2026. The final City Plan is scheduled to be adopted in 2028 following an Examination in Public. Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider and comment upon the ongoing development of City Plan at appropriate stages in the process.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 There is not an alternative option as there is a statutory requirement to keep the City Plan under review. The Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee is invited to note the update report.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 None specifically for this report as it is for noting, but it should be noted that there will be subsequent consultations on the new City Plan as it develops. The initial consultation was on ‘topic areas’ and the feedback will inform the development of the draft City Plan policies and site allocations and Appendix 1 contains the details of the initial consultation. There will be a further round of consultation and engagement once the draft Plan has been prepared. It is anticipated that the proposed submission plan will go to consultation in Autumn 2027.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is for noting. The cost of officer time, document production and consultation associated with City Plan will be funded from existing revenue budget within the Planning service.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack Date consulted: 03/07/25

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report because it is for noting. It is worth noting that the Council is under a statutory duty to keep its local plan under review. If the Council considers that a review is required it

must commence the plan making process. This includes notifying relevant bodies and stakeholders and inviting representations on what the updated local plan should contain. Further public consultation will be required when there is a proposed updated draft plan.

Name of lawyer consulted: Katie Kam

Date consulted: 01/07/25

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1 The new City Plan will help deliver equalities outcomes from new development. A Health and Equalities Impact Assessment (HEQIA) will be carried out on draft policies to ensure that they are coordinated to address equalities, and health and well-being outcomes throughout the city.
- 8.2 Lessons learnt from this initial round of consultation will help to inform and plan different ways to engage with underrepresented groups in future consultations to ensure everyone has a chance to input.

9. Sustainability implications

- 9.1 The City Plan is required to be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which promotes sustainable development.
- 9.2 A key outcome of the initial consultation showed strong support for high sustainability levels or green infrastructure in the city, which needs to be considered.

10. Health and Wellbeing Implications:

- 10.1 A Health and Equalities Impact Assessment (HEQIA) will be carried out on draft policies to ensure that they are coordinated to address equalities, and health and well-being outcomes throughout the city.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 The Place Overview & Scrutiny is asked to note the work that has been done to date on the City Plan review.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

- 1. City Plan engagement feedback presentation

City Plan 2041

Key Issues Consultation Update



Brighton & Hove
City Council

City Plan Timeline

- September 2024 – March 2026 developing evidence base with expert input
- Early-stage consultation on City Plan November 2024 – January 2025
- Full Draft Plan – includes draft policies (reg. 18)
 - Cabinet mid-2026
 - Consultation July – September 2026
- Proposed Submission Plan (reg. 19)
 - Cabinet/full council mid-2027
 - Consultation – autumn 2027
- Submission for examination early 2028
- Examination 2028

What went well?

- 531 responses (more than double the equivalent CPP2 stage)
- Successful engagement with young people:
 - 4 workshops in secondary schools and 2 in primary schools
 - 200 completed youth surveys
- 96,579 social media post impressions and 17,312 video views
- Officers attended 33 events (including drop-in sessions at libraries and events with representative groups)
- Social media engagement rates better than BHCC average
- Proportion of responses from minority groups broadly in line with Census 2021



Lessons learnt

- Questions perhaps not provocative enough - need to challenge people more on what is most important to them and probe importance between 2 issues to draw out priorities more
- Almost everything we suggested was considered important by a large majority which does not help when determining policy priorities.
- Young adult age group (20s,30s) now the most under-represented – need to think of ways of engaging this group next time.
- Limited attendance at some of the library drop in sessions
- Intensive approach to consultation used significant staff resources but the level of engagement was worth the staff time.

Key outcomes

Main Survey

- Broad support for maintaining the current Development Areas (the current plan allocates 8 key development areas to bring forward new homes, new commercial floorspace, sports facilities in the city)
- Strong support for development on brownfield, affordable housing and increasing density (but less support for very tall developments)
- Concern about second homes/short term lets and perception student homes prioritised over family homes.
- Strong support for high sustainability levels/green infrastructure in the city
- Mixed responses on the need for office accommodation
- Strong concerns about loss of industrial floorspace
- Many calls to improve cleanliness of the city and the look and feel of the city

Youth Survey

- Affordability of homes in the city was a key concern and whether they will be able to live in the city in the future
- Concern about the condition of the city centre and the seafront
- Safety in the city
- Cost of travel
- Lack of activities in the city for young people

- Delivering the above priorities would help to deliver the outcomes of the Council Plan including outcome 1 – a city to be proud of; outcome 2 – a fair & inclusive city and outcome 3 – a healthy city where people thrive.
- Link to the Interim Consultation Statement and the key findings from the youth survey: [Folder: City Plan 2041 | Brighton & Hove City Council](#)

Next Steps

- Policies in a draft plan scheduled for consultation Summer 2026 (subject to Cabinet approval in the Spring of 2026)
- Some of the key areas for consideration which will need to be explored with the Member Advisory Group as we start to draft policies include:
 - What are the policy priorities given the likely viability constraints in schemes – we will need decisions on how we balance affordable housing/ambitious sustainability levels/placemaking and high-quality designs and parking standards
 - Urban fringe – commission further studies to bring forward more sites
 - Industrial floorspace – evidence indicates we need to protect but there is pressure for residential. How can we ensure mixed uses are successful and cater for the commercial space appropriately?
 - Affordable workspace – do we want to subsidise affordable workspace at the expense of affordable housing?
 - Design and scale of developments – are we open to tall / very tall buildings in the city to maximise supply

Document is Restricted

