

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.00pm 14 JULY 2026

HOVE TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Parrott (Chair) Miller (Deputy Chair), Cattell, Mackey, McLeay, McNair, Shanks, Winder and Guilmant

Co-Optees present: Maria Cowler (Catholic Church diocesan representative), Adam Muirhead (Community Works Rep), Fiona England (PaCC), Dr Anusree Biswas (Community Works), Kendrick Tugwell (Parent Governor Rep), and Ilona Bradley Reijonen (Youth Council Rep)

PART ONE

5 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

5.1 (a) Cllr Guilmant for Cllr Czolak. Apologies received from Lesley Hurst and Sara Fulford.

(b) There were no declarations of interest.

(c) The Chair said: Whilst we have no Part Two items today, if members wish to raise any issues with the draft Part Two minutes from the special meeting held on 2nd June, we may need to exclude the press and public briefly.

6 MINUTES

6.1 RESOLVED The draft minutes of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 17th March 2026 were agreed as a correct of the meeting.

6.2 RESOLVED The draft minutes of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd June 2026 were agreed as a correct of the meeting.

7 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

7.1 Adrian Hart asked a public question. The Chair responded as follows:

Thank you for your question, Mr Hart. The review into the WellBN GP Practice by NHS England and Surrey & Sussex Integrated Care Board has identified serious issues regarding the clinical approach to care by some GPs at the practice.

The investigation was focused on the clinical practice of healthcare professionals working within WellBN GP Practice and the governance arrangements operating within that NHS service. Neither the investigation's terms of reference nor its findings examined Brighton & Hove City Council services, and the council is not the subject of any findings within the report. The investigation does not establish any connection between the matters identified and council-run services.

I note that a public question regarding the WellBN GP Practice was asked at last week's Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting. This is the correct forum for councillors to scrutinise local NHS services.

More broadly, you ask what assurances this committee will seek around the council's own policies, partnerships and safeguarding governance. The Council has a responsibility to carry out its functions in accordance with the law and will continue to do that. Safeguarding is an extensive subject for which teachers and social workers are well trained and versed in. The City Council's children's services are rating as outstanding and all but one of the city's schools are rated as good or outstanding. I am confident in the robustness of our safeguarding for young people and within schools. I do not have any plans to undertake scrutiny of these services in the manner you propose.

8 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

8.1 There was no member involvement.

9 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATION

9.1 The Chair gave the following communication: We have a busy agenda this afternoon, with a requested update on the progress of the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan, an update on the delivery of the housing strategy, SEND Sufficiency, the final report of the antisocial behaviour in social housing task & finish group, and a proposal for our next task & finish group.

We are going to take the items in a different order to that in the agenda as Genette Laws, our Corporate Director for Homes and Care, isn't able to be with us until later and she will be presenting the item on the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan. So, we will take the Housing Strategy first, followed by SEND Sufficiency, and then Adult social Care.

I was originally planning to have an item on Wellington House following on from the discussion that was had on this during our budget scrutiny meeting in February. However, the consultation only finished last week, meaning that this meeting was too soon for us to provide any meaningful scrutiny. As members may have seen, a special meeting has been arranged for 4th September at 14:00. This will allow time for the consultation results to be analysed and give us the chance to have a whole meeting dedicated to this important issue. It also means that we will be able to discuss and comment on the report that is going for decision at September Cabinet.

10 ADULT SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

10.1 Cllr Mitchie Alexander, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health, & Adult Social Care presented the report to the committee. She was joined by Genette Laws,

Corporate Director for Homes and Care, and Andy Witham, Director for Commissioning & Partnerships. Cllr Alexander's main points included:

- The background to the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan
- Peter Hayes, appointed by the Department of Health to oversee the section 50 notice, has recognised the improvements
- Anticipation of the section 50 notice being reviewed in the autumn
- Improvements in annual reviews and wait times in teams
- 45% for 25/26 annual reviews completed on time, with plans to get to 55% this year, compared to 29% at the point of inspection
- 1876 reviews needed to be completed by March 2027, needing to reach 469 by June 2026. Having reviewed 448, they were behind by 21 reviews, which they felt meant the target was achievable
- A new waiting safely framework formalising the process across teams and giving transparent data on how long and how many people are waiting
- A senior safety programme manager appointed for reablement
- 60% positive outcomes from reablement, with no ongoing care needed at 50% and reduced care needs at 10%
- New categorisation for residential admissions removes cases with mental health needs from returns data, bringing the council in line with other local authorities
- Moved from 15th in peer group to 3rd for residential and nursing placements for 18-64 year olds
- Moved from 14th to 7th in peer group for residential and nursing placements for people aged over 65
- Preparations for an inspection later in the year, although unconfirmed. This would now be five days rather than three days. The full process will take 19 weeks rather than 12 months.
- Clear ratified evidence of progress against areas highlighted by the CQC

10.2 Cllr Guilment spoke about the positives changes and moving up the league tables, he asked for information about the section 50 review and work with the Department of Health and why it was coming in the autumn, and what would move the council overall from Requires Improvement to Good. Cllr Alexander said that the section 50 review would be carried out by Peter Hayes from the Department of Health. Andy Witham spoke about the dedicated review team that were really making a difference and that this was best practice. Genette Laws said that reviews at 55% would still not be rated at good, and looking at other authorities some were at 70-75%, which is the aspiration for next year. She said that Peter Hayes was encouraged by the fact that the council recognised where work was needed and efforts focused on, which wasn't his experience elsewhere.

10.3 Fiona England asked what flags for burnout there were for unpaid carers of children aged 18 to 24, and if emergency placements had risen as a result of assessment delays. Andy Witham said that the waiting safely framework will help identify people needing support. Genette Laws explained that assessment was initially to see if people were eligible and that these were done as quickly as possible. She said that reviews were once people were receiving a service and the aim was to do these annually. In terms of emergency placements, she said that she was not aware of any that have occurred while waiting for an assessment, and that was why the waiting safely framework was in place.

10.4 Cllr Shanks said that it was good to see improvements, spoke about the TBM reports and Adult Social Care overspends. She asked if identifying more need was meaning more spending, and that people often thought of Adult Social Care as older people but that it was also younger people, and how co-production was feeding into the review. Genette Laws said that financially they were overspending as they were making sure to meet people's eligible needs and that meant they had more demand than in the budget. She said that the profile of working ages adults to older people was about 50/50 compared to even some of the London Boroughs where it was 60/40 in terms of 60% older people, meaning Brighton & Hove was unique in the number of people with mental health and physical disabilities and learning disabilities, which are the most expensive in terms of weekly costs. She said that they had aligned the savings and mitigations programme for the financial year with the improvement journey, including £888k for reablement and £1.2m for reviews.

10.5 Cllr Miller asked how the assessment improvements were being benchmarked, and what the KPIs were. She also asked about the prioritise actions and updates with shortfalls, such as safeguarding, governance, learning, and safe pathways. Genette Laws said that there was a monthly meeting chaired by the Director for Adult Social Care with Peter Haye from the Department of Health. She said that there is a dashboard and a team dedicated to measuring the progress in terms of delivery. She said that alongside monthly meetings there was a quarterly report to the Corporate Leadership Team. In terms of the areas mentioned she said that practice was really good and that once people were receiving a service in Brighton & Hove, the experience is broadly positive and that the issue is that it takes too long in terms of the initial assessment. Cllr Miller said that this was not reflected in the report. Genette Laws said that the issue was going to cabinet every six months and that she would ensure reports cover these areas. Andy Witham said that the focus was on the section 50 notice to get this removed but that other areas were being looked at.

10.6 Kendrick Tugwell said that it was good to see improvements. He asked how the Adult Social Care department were working with children's services and local schools to ensure that children with complex SEND needs transitioning into adulthood are not falling through any gaps. Andy Witham spoke about the transition strategy which looks at exactly that, and that they were in the process of hiring a programme lead to lead the delivery of that strategy. He said that the transition strategy had been to scrutiny before and that it could come back with an update on progress at a later date.

10.7 Cllr McNair asked what the main reasons were for the low judgements. Genette Laws said that the reasons for the section 50 were that they were not focused on reviewing people once they were in placements, which was a decision about how staff were deployed, which was identified before the inspection and why they introduced the reviewing team. At the inspection it was at 29% but that was already increasing to 45% by the end of the inspection. In terms of waiting times for inspections, she said it was probably about not being agile enough to not only recognise there was an issue but to think about solutions. She said that she was proud of the team for trying some different ways of working in order to reduce the wait time, which has gone from months to weeks, but there was still more to do. She said the third area that has contributed is the geography of the city and affordability of affordable housing. She said that they had a relatively high number of working age adults placed outside of the city, even if it is just over the border in Shoreham. She said that in terms of inspections that would be outside of the city even though it is easy for the family to visit. For county councils with a larger footprint, they could have people even within their boundaries having to travel large distances. She said things like Brickfields would help bring working age adults back.

10.8 Cllr Guilmant spoke about financial strains on the service as it is a statutory service and asked how they were fighting against it, or if it needed national reform. Andy Witham spoke about the preventative work done to help people early on, but said that if someone had an assessed need, then they had to meet it. Genette Laws said that they needed to reflect that people were living longer and unhealthier in later years, meaning demand is becoming more complex. She spoke again about the 50/50 profile of older people and working aged people and said that an increasing number of the working age adults have co-occurring support needs, such as mental health and substance misuse issues.

10.9 Cllr McLeay asked about contingencies if the numbers needing assessments were to rise. Genette Laws said that they carried out forecasting and scenario planning every year in the budget. She said that they wanted to get preventative measures better and where there was preventative need how to support it in a timely way. Andy Witham said that the development of the reablement offer focuses a lot on hospital discharges but is shifting to those who come through the front door.

10.10 Dr Anusree Biswas said that it was good to see the positive trajectory of improvements and welcomed the launch of the waiting safely framework. She asked what framework was used or people to qualify for the list and how it was prioritised. Genette Laws said that it was not so much that people qualified for the list, but that the team were looking through the case details of each person waiting to understand if there were any risks that would require a phone call to check in on them. She said that they took case notes with details of the issues that people were waiting for in terms of assessment, and that they looked at everyone who was waiting. The focus of the phone calls was those where they think there are risks but that everyone got called.

10.11 Cllr Miller spoke about prevention and reablement, including her experience of reablement following a stroke. She said that because she hadn't had physio which would have prevented a problem with her scoliosis, she suffered a slipped disk and had to have private physio which she could afford, but that many could not do so. She also spoke of the need to improve pavements and encourage people to be more active and not driving so much. Genette Laws said that Brighton & Hove was one of the least inactive cities in the country. She said that there was more to do for those who are inactive and more to do to help people make more healthy lifestyle choices.

10.12 Fiona England said that adults with learning disabilities die 15 years earlier than the rest of the population. She said that transition planning was key and wanted all areas of the council to work together focusing on what is available for young people with learning disabilities as they deserve healthy and active lifestyles. Genette Laws agreed that the Transition Strategy needed to be the anchor in which they thought about the outcomes and the life chances of those young people with disabilities. She said that dentistry and good oral care was vital to a healthy life. She said that she hoped the next time the Transition Strategy came back to committee that it was less focused on process and more on outcomes and impact.

10.13 Cllr Mackey said that she was pleased that progress was being made and asked about the process of involvement of families. Andy Witham said that they used various methods of capturing resident voices such as Health Watch and annual surveys to all users and carers. He said that when designing services, such as Brickfields, they involved service users in the design.

10.14 Cllr Winder asked about the difficulties of predicting demand and what planned interventions would help with this. She also asked about the importance of health hubs and how they would encourage socialisation and keeping residents active, as well as saving the council money. Genette Laws said that broadly the idea for health hubs was to bring health closer to where people were so that they could engage and do more self-care, which would help in the long term. She said that in terms of interventions they had the Better Care Fund which helps to pull not just resources together but knowledge and planning to response to the needs of residents in the city. She said that regarding forecasting they did have modelling that helps to anticipate what the numbers would be and that for the coming year they would include the impact of the reablement offer and more timely reviews. Andy Witham said that they have developed the integrated community teams, which are health lead teams involving social work teams, to bring support and services closer to people in their communities. He said that some of the strategies were cross cutting and city-wide strategies such as the Learning Disability Strategy and the Autism Strategy, which in the long run would help the council to help those individuals.

10.15 RESOLVED – People Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes the progress of the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan.

11 PROGRESS UPDATE ON DELIVERING OUR HOUSING STRATEGY

11.1 Cllr Williams, Cabinet member for Housing, was joined by Diane Hughes, Head of Strategy & Supply. Cllr Williams presented the report to the committee. Her main points were:

- Thanking Diane Hughes and her team for their work.
- The significant challenges faced, but the progress made
- Investment in council homes rising from £44m to £54m
- Campaigning to eradicate damp and mould
- Sustainability in council homes
- Delivering affordable homes
- Buying back over 500 homes
- Helping over 500 families with early intervention
- Improving resident engagement and becoming a more resident focused landlord
- 313 empty homes brought back into use
- 8694 homes in the new licensing scheme
- Looking closely at EIAs to reduce inequalities

11.2 Cllr McLeay commented that the expansion of the buyback of homes was great. She said that the figures did not include the 69 lost to right to buy or from the LPS blocks and how these would be reported going forward. Diane Hughes said that they report annually to government to see the positive or negative figures. She also said that area panels report on housing stock and these would be reflected in those reports.

11.3 Cllr Mcleay asked a question about EPCs with 89.2% leaving 1320 homes with an EPC of D or worse and how this would impact the council's net zero by 2030 target. Diane Hughes said that they were retrofitting homes to meet standards and would continue this work over the next few years.

11.4 Cllr Miller asked about the council's relationship with tenants and leaseholders, saying that there was a persistent thread of insufficient hearing of concerns. She recognised that there was a real desire to change in the department but wondered if it was reaching all staff who interact with tenants and leaseholders. Diane Hughes said that she was sorry to hear that and that the council wanted to be the best landlord possible. She added that they were doing work through the regulator of social housing's requirements around professional standards for staff that is co-produced with tenants and leaseholders and that there was also training on customer care.

11.5 Adam Muirhead asked about Andy Burnham's promise to build lots more homes when he becomes Prime Minister and if the strategy had the flexibility to change with national priorities. Cllr Williams said that if Andy Burnham gave them the cash to build then they would.

11.6 Cllr Cattell welcomed the report and asked how important commuted sums made by developers was. Cllr Williams said that it helped them to be able to build more homes or buy back more homes. Diane Hughes said that they had been buying back since 2019 and that commuted sums had been used very well. She said that they would prefer on site affordable housing but that this wasn't always possible.

11.7 Cllr McNair asked about the repairs backlog asking what they wanted to reduce it to and by when. He also asked about downsizing saying that for some residents who had lived in a three-bedroom house for many years it may end up more expensive for them to downsize to a one bedroom flat, and how would issues like this be mitigated. He also asked about when the Hollingbury Library site would be finished and welcoming residents. Diane Hughes said that the backlog was a major part of their work, with various reasons why it had increased. She said that they were putting in more resources and using prioritisation. She said that she would come back to the committee with the timeline. On Downsizing she said that it was difficult for residents, not necessarily because of the cost but that they needed handhold and supporting. On the Hollingbury she said that it was due this year and would get back to the committee with a date. Cllr Williams said that she was coming to the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee next week to discuss the housing regulator compliance update and would provide more details about the backlog there.

11.8 Cllr McLeay said that 63% of tenants believe that the council listen to them and what was being done to address the other third. She also asked about water safety and when the remaining actions would be completed. Cllr Williams said she would give more detail on water safety next week. Diane Hughes said that there had been a movement on residents' feelings which was great. She said that they had a programme of work called 'creating great homes together' to deliver on resident priorities including complaints handling, and that hopefully through the action plan things would improve for residents.

11.9 Cllr Guilmant said that the increase in funding from £44m to £54m was brilliant. He said that there was a trend of improvements in the backlogs and asked what the highest risk was they were dealing with at the moment. Cllr Williams said that water safety was really important and that she would not be happy until it was 100%.

11.10 Cllr Mackey asked how far along the council was with developing its supported housing strategy. She also asked about a licensing scheme for support housing. Diane Hughes said that they had been at a supported housing summit today and that it was in the development

stage with plans to take it to cabinet before March. She said that they were watching plans for a licensing scheme closely.

11.11 Cllr Shanks spoke about communication with residents and asked what was being done about heat in council homes given the recent heatwaves. She also asked if the council were purchasing empty homes and about sub-letting. Diane Hughes said that 313 properties bought were from the private sector and that they looked to intervene in properties empty for a year, asking owners if they wanted to let properties, offering them incentives to do so. She said that they worked closely with the corporate fraud team and said that residents should report any suspicions. She said that this summer had shown that action on heat was something that they should approach going forward.

11.12 Cllr Winder asked about community cohesion and making residents feel safe and welcome when moving between temporary and permanent accommodation. Cllr Williams said that residents received a welcome pack including information about the local area and safety information. She said that it was really difficult to keep people close to children's schools given the lack of accommodation but that they would try where possible. Diane Hughes said that within the 8 LPS blocks there was a lot of change but that the resident engagement team were working hard to support residents.

11.13 The Chair asked if co-production in terms of customer service included disability groups. Diane Hughes said that it did.

11.14 The Chair asked if in terms of VAWG the priority was to move perpetrators out of homes rather than victims. Diane Hughes said that it was if victims wished to remain in their home. She also said that staff were working to a victim centred approach and had trauma informed training.

11.15 Cllr Mackey asked about support for refugees given the city of sanctuary status the city holds. Diane Hughes spoke about government's Local Authority Housing Fund to buy homes to resettle Afghan families and said that they were working with the communities team to make sure that they are settled.

11.16 RESOLVED People Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed the to note the report.

12 SCRUTINY OF SEND SUFFICIENCY

12.1 The Chair gave the following statement: Before we take the presentation and questions I would like to make a comment on this item. This report is the beginning of a new and forward-thinking approach, how we work with the increasing complexity and scope of SEND provision in the city. On reading the report and going through it thoroughly I had many questions and concerns. However, I wanted to be clear that I do not see these concerns extending to the level of education and support that is currently being provided. Nearly all of our schools are rated as good or outstanding which is something we should all be immensely proud of. Our children and young people are engaged, safe and being treated well. Of particular note today is the Outstanding given to our two special needs schools- Downsview and Hillpark – they are to be commended that they continue to deliver against an increasingly complex and difficult environment. Their work and expertise will no doubt be immensely influential in the development of our sufficiency. It is the job of scrutiny to focus on where and how we can improve as I am sure this conversation will demonstrate. I wanted to just take a moment

though to reflect on the starting position we find ourselves in, sometimes we need to pause and reflect on where we are before we move forward.

Thank you to all of the council staff involved in SEND, our Heads, SENCOs and all teaching staff who do such a tremendous job.

12.2 Cllr Daniel, Cabinet Member for Children, Families, & Wellbeing, was joined by Georgina Clarke-Green, Director for Education. Cllr Daniel presented the report to the committee. Her main points were:

- The foundations, including the principles of belonging and ensuring children's voices were heard
- The new national direction for SEND and how the council was responding
- The oversight, finances, and governance
- Data on SEND in the city
- The growth in EHCPs of 57% in the last five years
- Data on SEND population changes
- Information on where children with EHCPs were educated
- The increasing costs driven by providers and inflation
- Budget break downs
- Forecasting data
- Post-16 provision
- Tiers of support
- What has been delivered in the last five years
- Key priorities

12.3 Cllr Cattell asked about children in care and care leavers, and if they were given extra support. Georgina Clarke-Green said that the virtual head was support post 16 care leavers and that the SEND reform included additional mental health support, and that there would be additional transition with preparing for adulthood plans.

12.4 Cllr McNair asked about digital individual plans and if there would be admin support. Georgina Clarke-Green said that they didn't know, from the Department for Education, what these would look like yet. She said that there would be a significant shift from local authority EHCP to schools and that they would need support.

12.5 Ilona Bradley Reijonen asked about consultation with children and young people and what this looked like. Georgina Clarke-Green said that the SEND Sufficiency work stream was driven from principles of belonging that they did with young people including black and racially minoritised people, children and young people with SEND, special school children, and those key themes have been a plank in our provision.

12.6 Kendrick Tugwell spoke about the £8.2m for new special bases, asked about support for mainstream primary schools where some had as many as 40% of children on the SEND register, and asked about support for staff. Cllr Daniel spoke about the alternative provision support team working in Rudyard Kipling school and the support provided for them. Georgina Clarke-Green spoke about the development of provision and the implementation of experts at hand and embedding the ordinarily available inclusive practice which is a co-produced piece of work across the system to create a base line for all schools to use when a school has a child with SEND. She spoke about the experts at hand investment from the Department for

Education of £1.75m in year one, with more promised in the future. She said 80% of the experts at hand resource will be directly accessible by schools. She said that they had added to that a rapid intervention gateway to assimilate other drivers and policies such as families first and best start in life. She said that families with children not in schools can access this rapid intervention gateway. She said that on the inclusive intervention bases there was an application process and that these were scored on a matrix.

12.7 The Chair asked about KPIs and monitoring. Cllr Daniel said that she provided a level of scrutiny, that there were governance arrangements across the programme and that herself and Deb Austin, Corporate Director of Families, Children, and Wellbeing, would be looking at whether they could incorporate some of their KPIs onto the corporate KPI dashboard, but that they would have to choose carefully. Georgina Clarke-Green said that there is also the SEND and AP partnership board, with the ICB, Fiona England from PACC, AMAZE, and others.

12.8 Cllr Shanks spoke about travel training, reforms needed from government, and uncertainty with a new Prime Minister. Georgina Clarke-Green said that they wanted to have as much provision locally as possible to minimise travel across the city for children and young people. She said that they wanted to prevent out of city placements. She spoke about the £1.6b inclusion mainstream fund that would help schools deliver some of the reforms. She said that they had not had the results of the SEND consultation back yet.

12.9 Cllr Guilmant asked about more SEND children going into mainstream schools and support for staff wellbeing. Cllr Daniel said that many of the children were already in the mainstream schools and being dealt with by those staff and SENCOs. She spoke about involving SENCOs and heads in the consultation response to unpick exactly what support they needed.

12.10 Cllr Guilmant asked about different school doing more than others and if this would create a level playing field. Georgina Clarke-Green said that there were different needs at different schools and that they would use SEND data to ensure the right support where it was needed.

12.11 Cllr McLeay asked about how children that are homeschooled would be re-engaged with. Georgina Clarke-Green said that she was really keen on when developing the expert at hand plans and rapid intervention gateway was those children and young people not at school were able to get wrap around support and engagement. She hoped to embrace those children and young people back into the system.

12.12 The Chair asked about support for parents. Georgina Clarke-Green spoke about the best start in life family hubs, saying that there was lots of support for parents to help them with their children's needs.

12.13 Cllr Mackey spoke about the dream for fully inclusive education and schools. She asked about training for teachers. Cllr Daniel said that the Secretary of State for Education had recently spoken about changes to the PGCE course to include more SEND training. Georgina Clarke-Green spoke about the range of training available for teachers and governors. The Chair spoke about her son who was training to be a teacher and the huge amount of training on SEND that he was doing.

12.14 Fiona England spoke about the positives of more support for children with autism. She asked questions around SEND reforms and the wider needs within neurodiversity. She said that parent carers in the city were keen to know whether the council would accept other ND needs within autism basis. She spoke about eligibility criteria for bases, and asked about post-16 learners not being sufficiently supported, with only 20 supported internship opportunities. Georgina Clarke-Green spoke about the autism speech and language strand in the Brighton & Hove inclusion support service, experts at hand offer does include specialist teachers for neurodiversity. On provisions one of them would be around autism and the others would be available for wider neurodiverse needs. They wanted to co-produce the eligibility criteria with parents, carers, schools and SENCOs, so Fiona would be involved in that. On post-16 she said that there was a lot of work to do and that they want to widen the number of entry level courses or post-16 and strengthen the transition planning further. She said that they needed to improve access to information for parents and carers on post-16.

12.15 Cllr Miller asked if all neurodiversities were classed as autism in the data as there was no reference to ADHD, ODD, or SPD. Georgina Clarke-Green said that this was not the case but that they had to work within the categories provided by the Department for Education and that there wasn't a specific category for ADHD.

12.16 Cllr Miller asked about using expertise in schools to spot and assist earlier. Cllr Daniel said that no support relied on diagnosis but on presenting needs. Georgina Clarke-Green said that they had to be careful as they were not medical so could not diagnose children and young people. Experts at hand is about getting the right support at the right time and the earlier we do so the less those needs will escalate.

12.17 Cllr Miller asked about masking meaning that children and young people were not receiving the right support or diagnosis and said that diagnosis was important to get the right support. She spoke about the difficulty to access EHCPs and if the council was measuring how disadvantage affects accessing them. Cllr Daniel said that the Secretary of State had said that disadvantaged families were less likely to pursue EHCPs. Georgina Clarke-Green said that this was a really good point and that they could use data to recognise intersectionality, which was something that they weren't doing enough.

12.18 Cllr Shanks asked about provision for afterschool and holidays. Cllr Daniel said that this was not covered in the SEND Sufficiency but in the Adolescence Strategy.

12.19 Adam Muirhead asked about the proposals for bases and how this reconciled with a need for a longer plan, and the plan for covering the high needs block in 2028. Georgina Clarke-Green said that the provisional bases was a three-year plan but that there would need to be a longer-term plan. She said that they would be evaluating and reviewing. On finances she said that they had managed the high needs block well and hadn't overspent until last year or the year before, whereas most councils were overspent by many millions, so it was not massive compared to many across the country. She said that government had said that SEND spending would be covered nationally by 2030 and as long as they carried on as they were then it would be covered.

12.20 Cllr Miller welcomed the direction of travel, said that it would be great to bring children back into the school system, and asked how this would be done. Georgina Clarke-Green said that it would depend on why they had left the school system, but that the door was always open and they would be supported to come back.

12.21 Dr Anusree Biswas asked what good quality training looked like, what ongoing support looked like, and how parents and young people engage about individual's decisions as some people are not able to navigate or advocating for themselves, because they are experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage or they might be from racialised communities. Cllr Daniel said that on marginalised groups that the massive expansion of early years free childcare helped to identify children who may have a learning support need or aren't meeting developmental milestones, as well as support from family hubs. Georgina Clarke-Green said that good quality training was sound evidence based and from good trainers who provided practical work and gave the opportunity to ask questions and clarify. She said that teachers did not always have the time for training, so they had to make it accessible. She spoke about the CVS groups that were involved in the SEND reforms including PACC and AMAZE. Dr Anusree Biswas asked if there were any organisations that focus on race or ethnicity that they might also have spoken with, and special provision becoming smaller. Cllr Daniel said that the Secretary of State, when launching the reform strategy had this in mind, particularly the new tiers before EHCP, so children don't need to go through that process to get the support. She said that the anti-racist schools practitioners were involved and provided challenges.

12.22 Fiona England said that she agreed with Anusree. She spoke about the SEND reform engagement timelines which was not realistic and that this was something that PACC nationally raised with the Department for Education. She said that engagement with marginalised communities takes time and planning to reach out to the right organisations across the city.

12.23 RESOLVED People Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency Plan 2026-2029 Report.

13 ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN SOCIAL HOUSING TASK & FINISH GROUP REPORT

13.1 Cllr Cattell, as Chair of the Task & Finish Group, introduced the report saying: Antisocial behaviour in social housing can have a profound and lasting impact on residents' wellbeing, feelings of safety, and sense of belonging within their communities. For many people, their home should be a place of refuge; when antisocial behaviour occurs nearby or within shared spaces, that sense of security can be deeply undermined. It was in recognition of this impact, and the concerns consistently raised by residents and councillors alike, that the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee established this Task & Finish Group.

Over the past months, the Task & Finish Group has undertaken a detailed and thorough examination of how antisocial behaviour in social housing is addressed across Brighton & Hove. We have drawn on a wide range of evidence, hearing directly from council officers, housing associations, the police, community safety teams, other local authorities, Members of Parliament's offices, and—most importantly—residents with lived experience of antisocial behaviour. I would like to thank everyone who gave their time to contribute openly and constructively to this work.

What quickly became clear is that while antisocial behaviour presents complex challenges, many of the frustrations experienced by residents stem not only from the behaviour itself, but from how cases are communicated, progressed, and resolved.

Recurrent themes across our evidence included the importance of clear and regular communication, effective expectation setting, timely use of enforcement tools, and better partnership working between agencies. We also heard powerful and deeply troubling accounts of racism related antisocial behaviour, underscoring the need for a clearer, more proactive, and explicitly zero tolerance approach to racially motivated harassment within housing environments.

This report recognises that no single intervention will eliminate antisocial behaviour altogether. However, the recommendations set out here are practical, evidence based, and informed by best practice from across the sector. If implemented, they have the potential to significantly improve residents' experiences—ensuring people feel listened to, supported, and confident that concerns are being taken seriously, even when cases are complex or lengthy.

I am particularly grateful to the residents who shared their experiences with the group. Their testimony grounded our work in reality and served as a constant reminder that behind every case file is a person, family, or community affected day-to-day by these issues.

I'd like to thank Jackie O'Quinn for her work on this Task & Finish Group as its original Chair. I'd also like to thank the members of the group for their hard work over many months to gather the evidence for this report.

I commend this report and its recommendations to the Council, partnerships, and housing providers across the city. I hope it will act as a catalyst for continued improvement, stronger collaboration, and a renewed focus on putting residents at the heart of our collective response to antisocial behaviour.

13.2 Dr Anusree Biswas welcomed the report and the work that had gone into it and asked if the committee could ask the Cabinet to ensure that any ASB action plan includes a specific hate-related ASB framework, with clear escalation routes, reasonable adjustments, language access, staff training, community reassurance and equalities monitoring of outcomes by protected characteristic.

13.3 Cllr Shanks asked about recommendations with cost implications and if they had been costed. Cllr Cattell said that they had not been costed as it would be up to cabinet to decide whether they would be taken forward or not, including the cost in their decision making process. She did say that many did not have cost implications such as lobbying for a special housing court.

13.4 Kendrick Tugwell asked if considerations had been made for children whose lives would be impacted by antisocial behaviour suffered at home. Cllr McLeay, who sat on the Task & Finish Group said that it was a really good point that the group hadn't considered during its investigations.

13.5 Adam Muirhead asked about a more asset based approach and supporting residents to support themselves. Cllr Cattell said that it was difficult as many residents were afraid to come forward in the first place for fear of being identified by the perpetrator.

13.6 Cllr Miller asked about the process and if it would come back to committee at some point. Giles Rossington, Scrutiny Manager, explained that the report would go to cabinet, who would

accept or reject each recommendation. Then at a later committee meeting an update would come back outlining progress of the accepted recommendations. He said that committee could ask to continue receiving these updates until they were happy that all of the accepted recommendations were completed or acknowledged that any remaining were not going to happen for whatever reason.

13.7 Cllr McLeay asked if the report had been shared with witnesses yet, and thanked scrutiny staff for their work supporting the Task & Finish Group. Luke Proudfoot, Overview & Scrutiny Officer, said that he had not yet shared the report with witnesses as he was waiting for approval of the report from the committee before doing so.

13.8 Cllr Cattell thanked Cllr McLeay and Cllr Fishleigh for their excellent contributions to the Task & Finish Group, particularly around casework examples as she does not get such casework.

13.9 Dr Anusree Biswas asked about the process of the suggestions put forward. The Chair said that the report could not be changed at this point but any additional points raised by members would be shared with the appropriate officers.

13.10 RESOLVED People Overview & Scrutiny notes the Antisocial Behaviour in Social Housing Task & Finish Group Report attached as Appendix 1; and Refers the findings of the Task & Finish Group Report on Antisocial Behaviour in Social Housing to Cabinet for consideration

14 NEXT TASK & FINISH GROUP

14.1 The chair gave the following statement: Our final item tonight is seeking the committee's approval for the next Task & Finish Group, which I am proposing to be on customer services. Following on from our discussion at the March committee meeting scrutiny officers and I held meetings with relevant council officers. I have concluded that there is more space to look at the council's customer service offer and provide useful recommendations that could possibly result in meaningful change.

Although young people's mental health, which was the other option I was considering, is incredibly important and an area that I know we all want to see improvements being made in. I do not think at this time that a task & finish group could bring up any new evidence or put forward any recommendations that are not already being considered. We are waiting for the finalisation of a number of initiatives and reports from government that will shape the direction that the country as a whole and Brighton and Hove as a city start to move in. Once the landscape is clearer then might be the time to reconsider a topic within this area for a task and finish group.

Included in the report are a scoping report and draft terms of reference for the task & finish group. The scoping report is a guideline to get the group started. The first meeting of the group will be a scoping meeting where we can discuss witnesses and how we want to proceed.

14.2 RESOLVED People Overview & Scrutiny agrees to establish a Task & Finish Group on Customer Services with the terms of reference set out in Appendix 1.

The meeting concluded at 8.11pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of