

Council

Agenda Item 36

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: 4 Year Funding Settlement and Efficiency Plan-
Extract from the proceedings of the Policy,
Resources & Growth Committee Meeting held on the
13 October 2016

Date of Meeting: 20 October 2016

Report of: Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of Council:

To receive the item referred from the Council for decision:

Recommendation:

That Council agrees to submit the Efficiency Plan at Appendix 1 to satisfy the conditions of acceptance for the government's 4 year funding settlement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

POLICY, RESOURCES & GROWTH COMMITTEE

4.00pm 13 OCTOBER 2016

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL, NORTON ROAD, HOVE, BN3 4AH

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Morgan (Chair), Hamilton (Deputy Chair), G Theobald (Opposition Spokesperson), Mac Cafferty (Group Spokesperson), Daniel, Janio, A Norman, Robins, Sykes and Wealls

PART ONE

51 4 YEAR FUNDING SETTLEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PLAN

- 51.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director for Finance & Resources in relation to 4 Year Funding Settlement and Efficiency Plan. As part of the December 2015 Spending Review, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government made an offer to Councils to take up a 4-year funding settlement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. To accept this offer, an 'Efficiency Plan' was required to be prepared and published by 14 October 2016. The report proposed that the offer was accepted as it would create some certainty of resources and was consistent with the Council's approach to its Medium Term Financial Strategy, 4-year Integrated Service & Financial Plans and modernisation programme. The government guidance was clear that the plan should draw heavily on existing plans and decisions, and provide a clear link to them. It was noted that the report would be considered at the Council meeting on 20 October 2016.
- 51.2 Councillor Sykes noted that most other local authorities were expected to take up the offer from Central Government; however, whilst the flexibility around the use of capital receipts was welcome, he was of the view that the settlement offered little else that was new for local authorities. On balance he felt that the Council should accept the proposal as it would provide the opportunity for greater planning; however, he noted that the position of the Green Party nationally would be to continue to resist budget reductions from Central Government; as such the Green Group would abstain from the vote.
- 51.3 The Chair noted that the proposal fulfilled a promise from the previous Secretary of State to give local authorities more ability to plan, and he hoped that accepting the recommendation in the report would provide greater clarity.
- 51.4 Councillor G. Theobald noted that many local authorities had been asking for this level of clarity for some years, and he stated that the Conservative Group welcomed and supported the initiative.

- 51.5 Councillor Hamilton noted that the settlement usually came out in December, and he hoped this initiative would give more security and allow for better planning.
- 51.6 The Executive Director for Finance & Resources noted that the proposed response would be politically neutral, but highlight the ongoing budget pressures the authority had to carefully manage.
- 51.7 The Chair put the recommendations to the vote; the recommendations were carried with 8 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.
- 51.8 **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

That Council agrees to submit the Efficiency Plan at Appendix 1 to satisfy the conditions of acceptance for the government's 4 year funding settlement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

