

Subject: Extract from the Proceedings of the Neighbourhoods, Communities and Equalities Committee, held on 24 November 2016 – Response to the report of the Fairness Commission

Date of Meeting: 8 December 2016

Report of: Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Committee:

To receive the item referred from the Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee for approval:

Recommendation: That the Committee agree the recommendations referred from the Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee:

That the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee agree the response to the Fairness Commission recommendations set out in Appendix 1 to this report and authorise Officers to take all steps necessary or incidental to the implementation of the responses.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOODS, COMMUNITIES AND EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

4.00PM 16 NOVEMBER 2016

ST RICHARD'S CHURCH HALL, EGMONT ROAD, HOVE

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Councillors Daniel (Chair), Moonan (Deputy Chair), Simson (Opposition Spokesperson), Littman (Group Spokesperson), Bell, Gibson, Hill, Horan, A Norman and K Norman

Invitees: Sally Polanski (Community Works), Anusreee Biswas Sasidharan (Brighton & Hove Police Ethnic Group) and Lisa Bell (Sussex Police)

PART ONE

37. RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE FAIRNESS COMMISSION

- 37.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive lead Officer, Strategy, Governance and Law presenting the Council's response to the recommendations of the Brighton and Hove Fairness Commission.
- 37.2 The processes used for coordinating, responding to and responding to and managing the recommendations within the Council as well as setting out the wider city partner responses and the arrangements for implementation and governance going forward were set out. Appendix 1 to the report set out detailed responses received to each recommendation and supporting information regarding timescales, responsibilities and budget where relevant.
- 37.3 It was noted that full implementation would be a long term process and that the recommendations would be used to influence, level and affect change across a wide range of services and that the council would ensure that the recommendations were embedded into its core business planning and performance frameworks. The Fairness Commission had been undertaken in a short timeframe during which it had heard from a huge number of contributors which had resulted in the final report including a significant number and range of recommendations at a time of reducing budgets.
- 37.4 Councillor Simson referred to Recommendation 49 which related to "Poverty Proofing the School Day". Whilst considering that this should be put into place if needed she considered that this should not be applied on a blanket basis in the absence of discussions taking place with individual schools first, this might not be needed at all schools. Given current financial constraints, Councillor Simson stated that she was anxious that available funds were applied where they were most needed.

- 37.5 The Chair, Councillor Daniel agreed stating that it was timely for such discussions to take place in advance of budgets being set as they could then inform the decision making process. It was confirmed that following approval of the recommendations further discussions would take place, with the schools and with other partners in relation to the relevant areas to ensure that available funding was utilised appropriately.
- 37.6 Councillor Simson referred to recommendation 5 of the report stating in her view the word “monitoring” needed to be added before the word “delivery”. There was agreement by the Committee that this would be appropriate and this was taken up as an amendment and voted upon when the Committee considered the report recommendations.
- 37.7 Councillor Simson stated that a number of the points and recommendations which had come forward had also been highlighted as a result of earlier scrutiny panels, the Social Value Scrutiny and in relation to street clutter were cited. In view of the longer term aims of the Fairness Scrutiny she was anxious that the outcomes from this earlier work were not lost.
- 37.8 Councillor K Norman agreed, commending the work which had been carried out, especially by colleagues on the Cross Party Member Working Group of which he was aware that Councillors Littman and Simson had been Members. This represented a valuable piece of work and valuable pieces of work had been undertaken in the past it was important that these were not lost sight of.
- 37.9 Councillors Moonan and Littman concurred agreeing with the approach which had been adopted, considering that it was important to “future proof” the recommended approach. Councillor Littman considered that against the backdrop of reduced funding it was important to ensure that this work was carried forward, an important tool in ensuring that was achieved in his view was to feed this into the EIA process which would ensure that it fed into the budget process and that an appropriate level of on-going monitoring took place.
- 37.10 Councillor Gibson considered that as this work was cross-cutting across a number of departments and budgets that it would be appropriate for the relevant strands to go forward to the appropriate individual committees. Councillor Littman concurred in that view. The Chair, Councillor Daniel stated however that that this could result in a delay. Following approval by the Policy and Resources Committee work would continue within the Council and with its partners. The Chair sought confirmation from the Committee as to whether they wished to pursue that approach but it was rejected by the remaining eight remaining Committee Members.
- 37.11 Anusri Biswas Sasidharan, asked whether there were provisions in place which enabled the Fairness Commission to challenge proposed budget cuts. It was explained that whilst they did not have the ability to do that by feeding into the budget process Members would be aware of all germane issues when making their decisions.
- 38.12 Sally Polanski, stated that in view of the involvement of external partners which had fed to both the consultation process and the subsequent process in addition to their role as independent members it was important to ensure that all partners were fully involved in the process to ensure that all agencies were working in tandem. Third Sector Partners

had believed they were working collaboratively in putting together a Youth Strategy but had subsequently found that what was anticipated was not what was actually in place, this needed to be addressed. The Head of Communities and Equality, Emma McDermott, explained that a meeting was being arranged with voluntary sector representatives at an early date to ensure that the necessary processes were embedded and monitored.

38.13 The Chair, Councillor Daniel, then moved to the vote. She asked whether Members were minded to Councillor Simson's proposed amendment to recommendation 5 (highlighted below). Members voted unanimously in agreement.

38.14 The Chair, Councillor Daniel stated that in view of Members concerns that appropriate measures were in place to ensure that appropriate levels of monitoring were in place she proposed that an additional recommendation be approved (as set out below). This was seconded by Councillor Littman and Members voted unanimously in agreement.

“(6) That going forward it is recommended that the strands identified should be subject to an EIA attached in order to seek to ensure that the improvements and changes sought are monitored and an assessment is capable of being made as to whether they are being achieved.”

37.15 **RESOLVED :**

- (1) That the Committee welcomes and agrees the responses detailed in Appendix One to this report;
- (2) That the Committee agrees with the outcomes of the cross party Member working group process; including the decision to prioritise 15 recommendations as set out in Appendix Two to the report;
- (3) That the Committee notes that other recommendations are being progressed, either within the council or beyond through Brighton and Hove Connected and the family of partnerships;
- (4) That the Committee notes that budget decisions for prioritised recommendations will be taken forward through the budget setting process;
- (5) That the Committee agrees to hold responsibility for *monitoring* delivery against the recommendations on behalf of the Council; and
- (6) That going forward it is recommended that the strands identified should be subject to an EIA attached in order to seek to ensure that the improvements and changes sought are monitored and an assessment is capable of being made as to whether they are being achieved.

37.16 **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** – That the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee agreed the response to the Fairness Commission recommendations set out in Appendix 1 to this report and authorises Officers to take all steps necessary or incidental to the implementation of the responses.