

Subject: Water Fountains to Reduce Rubbish and Pollution –
Petition:
Extract from the proceedings of the Council Meeting
held on the 2 November 2017

Date of Meeting: 16 November 2017

Report of: Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Tourism, Development & Culture Committee

To receive the item referred from the Council for consideration.

Recommendations:

That further to the decision to consult on a preliminary charging schedule, the Committee consider whether water fountains should be included as an option in the BHCC regulation 123 infrastructure list, as part of health care infrastructure provision, to enable the Community Infrastructure Levy to be used as a possible means of funding water fountains.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**COUNCIL****4.30PM 2 NOVEMBER 2017****COUNCIL CHAMBER, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL****DRAFT MINUTES**

Present: Councillors Marsh (Chair), Simson (Deputy Chair), Atkinson, Barford, Barnett, Bell, Bennett, Bewick, Brown, Cattell, Chapman, Cobb, Daniel, Deane, Druitt, Gibson, Gilbey, Greenbaum, Hamilton, Hill, Horan, Hyde, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Meadows, Mears, Miller, Mitchell, Moonan, Morgan, Morris, Nemeth, A Norman, K Norman, O'Quinn, Page, Peltzer Dunn, Penn, Phillips, Robins, Russell-Moyle, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wares, Wealls, West and Yates.

32 PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE**(a) WATER FOUNTAINS TO REDUCE RUBBISH AND POLLUTION**

- 32.1 The Mayor stated that where a petition secured 1,250 or more signatures it could be debated at the council meeting. She had been made aware of two such petitions and would therefore take each in turn.
- 32.2 The Mayor then invited Mr. Charles Cross as the lead petitioners to present the petition calling on the Council to look into the provision of drinking fountains capable of being used to fill bottles around the city, in order to reduce the excessive use of plastic in purchased water bottles:

“We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove Council to provide research into a full costing for setting up 6 simple drinking “fountains” (taps) capable of being used to fill bottles around the town in order to attempt to reduce the excessive use of plastic in purchased water bottles and the consequent pollution and cost of rubbish disposal. Such a costing should take into account any savings from reduced rubbish as well as the construction and running costs of each fountain and could exact a small levy on supermarket rent and rates to contribute to the running costs.”

Additional Information

“In this way we can plan a future where no water is sold in bottles in Brighton and people carry a bottle knowing there are multiple water refill points throughout the city. The fountains could be made into more elaborate and ornamental structures through crowd funding which would add to the charm of the town and contribute to reduced litter in the streets, beaches and countryside.”

- 32.3 Mr. Cross thanked the Mayor and stated that over 2,600 people had signed the petition making it the 3rd highest in the council's history. He stated that there was a need for the city council to take a progressive step and follow other leading cities such as San Francisco in banning the sale of bottled water on city owned land and in city buildings and to provide water filling stations across the city. He suggested that other organisations such as super markets could be encouraged to locate the water fountains in their premises and noted that Borough Market in London had installed a water fountain. He therefore urged the council to give this matter due consideration.
- 32.4 The Mayor thanked Mr. Cross and noted that there were three amendments to the recommendation listed in the report on the petition. She therefore called on Councillor Morgan to respond to the petition and to move the amendment on behalf of the Labour & Co-operative Group.
- 32.5 Councillor Morgan thanked Mr. Cross for presenting the petition and stated that the amendment was to refer the matter to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee rather than the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee. He agreed that there were environmental issues with the use of plastic water bottles and noted that the council had stopped using them at council meetings. He also noted that there were questions around the cost of provision and associated health matters in regard to the provision of water fountains but he was happy to request officers to bring a full report to committee in due course.
- 32.6 Councillor Moonan formerly seconded the amendment.
- 32.7 Councillor Wares moved an amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group and also welcomed the petition and stated that he would support both the Labour & Co-operative and Green Groups' amendments. He also noted that the issue had been raised previously at the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee in 2014 and hoped that some progress could be made this time.
- 32.8 Councillor Bell formerly seconded the amendment.
- 32.9 Councillor Mac Cafferty moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group and stated that the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy should be considered as a means of financing the provision of fountains so that publicly accessible water could be provided. He noted that people were aware of the corrosive impact of plastic on the environment and that the provision of water fountains was one way of reducing the use of plastic bottles.
- 32.10 Councillor Druitt formerly seconded the amendment.
- 32.11 Councillor Morgan noted the comments and stated that it appeared councillors were in agreement about the general approach to the matter which could therefore be taken forward.

32.12 The Mayor noted that three amendments had been moved and stated that she would therefore take in each in turn and put them to the vote. The Mayor noted that all three amendments had been carried.

32.13 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the petition be noted and referred to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee for consideration at its meeting on the 30th November, 2017;
- (2) That the Committee be requested to consider receiving a report on the costings requested in the petition as detailed in paragraph 3.1 and such report be extended to include advice on the public health risks associated with public drinking water fountains and taps and the measures to mitigate these risks that would also go to the costs; and
- (3) That a report be brought to the relevant committee exploring the proposals set out in the petition at paragraph 3.1; including the options for utilising the Community Infrastructure Levy as a possible means of funding and specifically, that further to the decision of the Tourism, Development & Culture Committee on the 21st September to consult on a preliminary charging schedule, that water fountains be considered for inclusion in the BHCC regulation 123 infrastructure list, as part of health care infrastructure provision.