

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**COUNCIL****4.30pm 30 APRIL 2009****COUNCIL CHAMBER, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL****MINUTES**

Present: Councillors Peltzer Dunn (Chairman), C Theobald (Deputy Chairman), Alford, Allen, Barnett, Bennett, Mrs Brown, Carden, Caulfield, Mrs Cobb, Davey, Davis, Drake, Duncan, Elgood, Fallon-Khan, Fryer, Hamilton, Harmer-Strange, Hawkes, Hyde, Janio, Kemble, Kennedy, Kitcat, Lepper, Marsh, McCaffery, Meadows, Mears, Mitchell, Morgan, Mrs Norman, K Norman, Older, Oxley, Pidgeon, Randall, Rufus, Simpson, Simson, Smart, Smith, Steedman, Taylor, G Theobald, Turton, Wakefield-Jarrett, Watkins, Wells, West, Wrighton and Young.

PART ONE**74. STATUTORY OR VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE BY COUNCILLORS OF INTERESTS IN MATTERS APPEARING ON THE AGENDA.**

74.1 There were no declarations of interest.

75. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19 MARCH 2009 (COPY ATTACHED).

75.1 The minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on the 19 March 2009 were agreed as a correct record of the proceedings.

76. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

76.1 The Mayor stated that he was pleased to inform Members that the Council had recently been successful at the South East Regional Local Employment Partnership Awards, and called on Councillor Fallon-Khan to come forward and present the awards for Recruitment Innovation and Work Skills to the Local Employment & Opportunities Manager, Joe Davenport.

76.2 The Mayor stated that he was pleased to announce that Councillors Duncan, Wakefield Jarrett, Mitchell and Elgood were taking part in the 6th annual Stonewall Brighton Equality Walk, and encouraged fellow councillors to sponsor them.

- 76.3 The Mayor then called on the Acting Chief Executive to update Council on the action being taken in respect of the swine flu outbreak.
- 76.4 The Acting Chief Executive stated that whilst there was no confirmed case of swine flu in the city, officers had met as part of the emergency planning process to consider how best to react to the matter and they would continue to monitor the situation. He would ensure that all Members were kept informed of action being taken and advice that was being given nationally.

77. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS.

- 77.1 The Mayor invited the submission of petitions from councillors. He reminded the Council that petitions would be referred to the appropriate decision-making body without debate and the councillor presenting the petition would be invited to attend the meeting to which the petition was referred.
- 77.2 Councillor Ann Norman presented a petition signed by 160 residents concerning improvements to the playground at Westdene.
- 77.3 Councillor Ann Norman presented a petition signed by 90 residents concerning the proposed extension of residents parking in the Preston Park Station area.
- 77.4 Councillor Oxley presented a petition signed by 420 residents concerning, the opposition to the possibility of a major food retailer being sited in Portland Road.
- 77.5 Councillor Kitcat presented a petition signed by 54 members of the Preston Street Traders Association, concerning the ability to offer discounted parking at the Regency Square Car Park.
- 77.6 Councillor Kitcat presented a petition signed by 54 members of the Preston Street Traders Association, concerning the need for Preston Street to be turned into a mixed-used street.
- 77.7 Councillor Davis presented a petition signed by 116 residents concerning the reinstallation of the cupola at Hove Library.
- 77.8 Councillor McCaffery presented a petition signed by 193 residents, concerning improvements to the playground at Blakers Park.
- 77.9 Councillor Mitchell presented a petition signed by 174 residents, concerning seafront parking in Madeira Drive.
- 77.10 Councillor Older presented a petition signed by 30 residents, concerning communal bins.
- 77.11 Councillor Kemble presented a petition signed by 62 residents, concerning parking arrangements for Worcester Villas.

77.12 Councillor Bennett presented a petition signed by 13 residents, concerning the provision of a green waste collection for allotment holders.

77.13 Councillor Turton presented a petition signed by 101 residents, concerning Whitehawk and Rottingdean Libraries.

78. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

78.1 The Mayor reported that two written questions had been received from members of the public and invited Mr. Hawtree to come forward and address the council.

78.2 Mr. Hawtree asked the following question:

"Would Councillor Mears please tell us what steps she will be taking to increase the administrative support for this authority's Overview and Scrutiny function?"

78.3 Councillor Mears stated that, "the overview and scrutiny function is an important part of the council's constitutional arrangements and one we are committed to supporting and developing. Overview and scrutiny plays a key role in scrutinising the work of the Cabinet, as can be seen in the Call-ins we have had this year, and is undertaking some good policy development work. The overview and scrutiny function is resourced sufficiently to support six committees with six officers and additional designated support available in each of the council's directorates. This level of resource has allowed for nine ad-hoc panels to be run during 2008-2009, the first year of the new constitutional arrangements, to conduct in-depth reviews of:

- Older people and community safety
- Dignity at work
- Young people and alcohol related harm
- Climate change adaptation
- Street furniture
- Environmental Industries
- Students in the Community
- GP led health centres

Additionally a select committee investigating dementia issues was established at the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. From the number and range of issues being looked at you can see that the overview and scrutiny function is taken very seriously and is provided with adequate support. There are therefore no specific plans to increase the level of support available."

78.4 Mr. Hawtree asked the following supplementary question:

"Although some might think of Scrutiny as a dry subject we were, in fact, assured that with the current set-up, the Cabinet system, it would act in anticipation as a form of the much missed committee system which certainly made for some cogent discussion: one might remember the Carnegie Library.

It has been generally recognised that scrutiny, in fact, contrary to what you say is under powered. Indeed as the six monthly review documents have lamented in some detail, we have debateless Cabinet meetings and fifteen minute Culture meetings for example. Yet, as you will doubtless be addressing these when the subject has further discussion later on in this meeting, could you now tell us whether more basically it will be a matter for scrutiny or whether you will, in fact, be calling a by-election in Goldsmid Ward, where by their own admission a current incumbent foregoes his allowance owing to other pressures and I must say that is perfectly understandable, as happened in Regency Ward.

I am asking, even more fundamentally than scrutiny, whether you will be calling a bye-election so that residents can have a full complement of Councillors?"

78.5 The Mayor stated that the reference to the position of the Member for Goldsmid Ward and whether there would be a by-election was out of order as it did not relate to the original question. However, he noted that Councillor Mears may wish to comment further on the position of Overview & Scrutiny.

78.6 Councillor Mears thanked the Mayor and responded, "the question of scrutiny, as you know we have gone into new constitutional arrangements and I am sure you are aware that with the Cabinet system and the Cabinet Members Committees we do have an opportunity there for members of the public to come forward and ask their questions. Unfortunately, we don't get those, which is very unfortunate but I am sure as the system progresses hopefully it will happen. Overview and Scrutiny, as you know, is going to be debated further this evening so I am sure it will be debated there and if you have any other issues, Mr Hawtree, I am more than happy to write to you."

78.7 The Mayor thanked Mr. Hawtree for his questions and invited Mr. Beatty to come forward and address the council.

78.8 Mr. Beatty asked the following question:

"If the Leader of the Council will update the city on the progress regarding the study into the impact of the introduction of major supermarkets on local neighbourhood shopping centres such as Portland Road, Hove?"

78.9 Councillor Mears stated, "Welcome to the Council meeting Mr Beatty. It is very good to see you again and you gave an excellent presentation to the Cabinet meeting a few weeks ago.

I believe it is important that the traders in Portland Road come together on this issue and I understand that you have just recently formed a new Portland Road Traders' Association. I am sure that this will really help you put your case on issues like this and I think it is also important that this has support from across the political spectrum.

To turn to the substance of your question, officers have looked at a number of pieces of research on businesses and employment both nationally and in Brighton and Hove and I would just like to highlight the following findings:

Nationally, the seven main supermarkets now have an 87% share of the market while independents have just 3%. However, over the last ten years in Brighton and Hove, there has actually been a rise in employment in smaller shops and a drop in employment in larger stores.

Nationally, there has also been a shift in district centres from traditional food stores and shops towards a wider range of uses such as coffee shops, restaurants and estate agents occupying the smaller retail premises. This expansion and diversification of usage can be seen in the Portland Road area and I think that the local community benefits from the variety.

Officers undertook a research trip to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, where measures are being developed to protect the independent retail sector. As a result of this and our broader understanding of the importance of the independent shops in the city, we are aiming to incorporate such policies into our emerging Local Development Framework (our most important piece of planning strategy). The purpose of these is to retain small retail units and maintain balance in district centres. We also carried out surveys into vacancy rates and potential use types across the city's district centres, to measure any trends.

What is also very important to highlight – and is one of the key findings from the work from Kensington and Chelsea – is the power of residents and visitors. Marketing has its own success with customers as key to the future of the small retail sector. We are doing as much as we can to support local businesses through our Be Local, Buy Local Campaign, and this has proven to be a real success so far.

In summary – we are continuing to look at the impact of the larger food retail shops on the smaller ones, and of other trends and policies on the health of our independent retail sector and our district centres. In Brighton and Hove we do not want to damage or lose our independent traders, in terms of food stores or any other types of retail. Whilst we must operate within our planning policy constraints, we are doing as much as we can to protect independent stores – both through planning and the support to businesses with our own marketing.

I hope that this is helpful and I would be happy to take any questions. I would also like to add as well, particularly in areas like Portland Road and many other districts in the city, what makes Brighton and Hove so unique is our diversity. I think it's key to Brighton and Hove, it's one of the things that makes us so special and it really is important for any local council to ensure that we protect it."

78.10 Mr. Beatty asked the following supplementary question:

"Given that the adopted carpet strategy used by some of the major food retailers appears to be wide-spread across our city, would it be prudent to make a request of the Leader of the Cabinet and Council to appoint a cross-party study group that would be aided by key officers of the council to promote a route in order to resist the monopolisation by the few and to support the inventiveness and diversity brought ahead and about by the city's home grown businesses?"

78.11 Councillor Mears responded, "I am more than happy to look into that. We are taking a paper that will be going to the Cabinet Members Committee to look at the information that we have had on the research that we have carried forward and any other figures that we have. I will make sure that you have the date of that meeting and I hope that traders will be able to come along. I am sure that we can look into any other issues that you would like about working parties. The officers can look into it at the same time they present the paper."

78.12 The Mayor thanked Mr. Beatty for his questions.

79. DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

79.1 The Mayor noted that no deputations had been received for the current meeting.

80. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.

80.1 The Mayor reminded the council that councillors' questions and the replies from the appropriate councillor were now taken as read by reference to the list included in the addendum, which had been circulated as detailed below:

80.2 (a) Councillor Elgood asked:

"What action does the Cabinet Member for Environment intend to take in light of European Commissioner Loizos Loizou's findings that the process for the joint Brighton and Hove/East Sussex County Council contract for waste incineration was not undertaken correctly?"

80.3 Councillor Theobald replied:

"The position is that in 2007 an extension was granted to the original Waste Management Services Contract. This was agreed having taken legal opinion that the process proposed for the extension was reasonable.

The EU Commission has written to the UK Government to advise that they consider at this stage that the extension to the original contract should have been put out to tender. However, the Commission has invited the UK Government to submit its observations on this view. The Councils [Brighton & Hove and East Sussex] are now assisting the Government in responding to the request for further information and observations."

80.4 Councillor Elgood asked a supplementary question, "Could I thank the Cabinet Member for his frank response. Can I also just ask if he would publish the council's response to the Government's enquiries on this matter and then subsequently the Government's response to the European Commission. Would he also perhaps take time to reflect on this policy as it now has come from a deeply discredited process and is a deeply damaging policy to the environment of East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. Will he rethink this policy once and for all?"

80.5 Councillor Theobald replied, "Answering the first part of the supplementary, I am quite happy to supply you with the most information that we can through a briefing note, having taken advice in these circumstances. I don't really have any comment on the other parts of Councillor Elgood's supplementary."

80.6 Councillor Fryer asked a further supplementary question, "We have constantly spoken against the incinerator, both publicly and in our complaints to the EU authorities. In light of the findings of the Euro Commissioner will Councillor Theobald be prepared to renegotiate the contract with Veolia to include anaerobic digestion and mechanical biological treatment which will remove the need for incineration, such as the examples which have happened in other authorities with contracts with Veolia?"

80.7 Councillor Theobald replied, "I think we just need to see what the outcome is."

80.8 **(b)** Councillor Allen asked:

"Is the Administration committed to the continuation of the mobile library service?"

80.9 Councillor Smith replied,

"Yes, the Administration is committed to the continuation of the mobile library service."

80.10 Councillor Allen asked a supplementary question, "I asked this question because of rumours that had reached me that there is some ambiguity about this and I welcome the response from Councillor Smith. Could Councillor Smith now clarify whether the intention is to keep this service kind of just ticking over or whether you intend to develop it, in which case what action will you take to publicise the service to inform the public where and when the mobile van stops, whether consideration will be given to introducing additional stops and so on?"

Will Councillor Smith confirm that if the mobile service is further developed this will not be at the expense of branch libraries which, of course, is what is happening under the Conservatives in Swindon?"

80.11 Councillor Smith replied, "The mobile libraries are an important part of the city's library service and all we are looking for is to improve that service for the residents of the city."

80.12 **(c)** Councillor Allen asked:

"Can the Cabinet Member for Culture confirm that income from sales from the Jubilee Library shop covers all the costs (e.g. staffing, heating, maintenance) of running the Jubilee Street Library shop? If not, what level of subsidy from the library budget is required?"

80.13 Councillor Smith replied,

"Looking at the budget for 2008-09, the income generated by the Booklover Store covered its trading costs, including staffing costs. The building costs relating to the space occupied by the Booklover Store are fully incorporated in the Jubilee Library costs

and have not been disaggregated. The shop generates income that contributes to meeting the income targets for the Jubilee Library as a whole.”

- 80.14 Councillor Allen asked a supplementary question, “While trying to interpret the answer which talks about costs not being disaggregated, I gather that, in fact, this shop is not truly self-financing. I am shocked, though not entirely surprised, to learn that the library shop is propped up by money which should be spent on books and, dare I say it, more and better shelving.

Does Councillor Smith not accept that if you are going to have a retail outfit which has no convincing relationship with the contents of the library, it really should be truly self-financing? In addition will Councillor Smith not accept that this valuable space could be used in a radically different, non-commercial way as a community information display area where, for instance, cultural groups and voluntary organisations could display their wares?”

- 80.15 Councillor Smith replied, “I would say ‘no’, it’s a straight answer like that. I think it’s an integral part of our library service to have a shop there which sells books, cards and everything for the public and it is good, it is good for the users because we get a lot of new users and membership of the library that come in the shop first. The answer is ‘no’, it’s an integral part of the library service and we are proud to have it.”

- 80.16 Councillor Kitcat asked a further supplementary question, “I was just wondering if Councillor Smith could name any of the books on sale in the shop at that library?”

- 80.17 Councillor Smith replied, “Yes.”

- 80.18 **(d)** Councillor Duncan asked:

“Can the Cabinet Member for Children Services tell us what steps were taken to ensure that the financial collapse of St Mary’s Hall School in Eastern Road had no negative impact on the education of the city’s children, both pupils at the school and those of other schools which they will attend from next year?”

- 80.19 Councillor Brown replied,

“At the time of the announcement of the closure of St Mary’s Hall School we communicated with Roedean School to ensure that parents of children affected were aware of the arrangements with regard to admissions in Brighton and Hove schools. The situation is, of course, outside the direct control of the council but all appropriate action has been taken to minimise the negative impact on the city’s children, both pupils at St Mary’s Hall School and those attending Brighton & Hove schools.

With regard to school admissions, we have considered around a dozen applications from parents seeking places at maintained schools. In addition to the applications, we have also dealt with a number of enquiries from parents. In accordance with school admissions arrangements, we have only been able to offer places at schools with vacancies. At this stage of the year this is quite limited, given that most schools are full in established year groups.

With regard to the effect on other children in Brighton & Hove, any additional numbers in Brighton & Hove schools will ultimately feed into the council's funding from central government and will be reflected in the delegated budgets that schools receive which are based largely on pupil numbers. This will ensure that in due course maintained schools accepting pupils from St Mary's Hall will receive additional resources commensurate with increased pupil numbers."

80.20 Councillor Duncan asked a supplementary question, "We've got a wonderful, wonderful service for bringing empty homes back into use in this city and I wonder are there any powers or is there anything we can do to ensure the empty buildings of St Mary's Hall School are used as a publicly available school facility serving the centre and east of the city in line with the residents wishes, as clearly expressed?"

80.21 Councillor Brown replied, "My understanding is that all the St Mary's Hall buildings have actually been taken over by Roedean along with the pupils from the school and we don't own the buildings, unfortunately, anyway."

80.22 Councillor Simson asked a further supplementary question, "Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that once the Falmer Academy is developed it will provide an excellent educational opportunity for all young people in the city, including those whose education may be threatened should any private school find itself under threat of closure in the future?"

80.23 Councillor Brown replied, "I am very pleased to say that the Academy is on track and will still be opening in 2010 and finished in 2011. We have now appointed a Principal Designate and this month we will be appointing the contractors."

80.24 (e) Councillor Duncan asked:

"Residents of Rochester Street have reported that an ambulance was unable to access their street last month to administer emergency healthcare to an elderly man who had collapsed following an aortic aneurism. The man was reportedly told that the street was inaccessible to emergency vehicles because of the haphazard and unmanaged nature of parking in the Baker's Bottom area: does the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services have any plans to speed up the proposed review of parking arrangements in the area?"

80.25 Councillor Theobald replied:

"I am sorry to hear about the elderly resident in your ward. I can only answer the final part of your question where you ask about future reviews as I am sure that you know that the Police and Emergency Services would be responsible for dealing with the specific issue that you have raised. Any interim measures can only be conducted by the Police. I know that they do as much as they can to enforce against bad parking here, particularly on the road junctions. This has included 3 letter drops, leafleting badly parked cars, polite notices and fixed penalty notices."

Historically I understand that residents opted out of the parking scheme proposed but I can inform you that this is about to be reviewed and officers are intending to conduct parking surveys here later this spring and summer as part of a larger parking review."

80.26 Councillor Duncan asked a supplementary question, “I think that the residents of the Baker’s Bottom area won’t take an awful lot of comfort from this answer. I think that if you actually ask the people who live there they haven’t seen any sign of activity and the fact that it’s going to happen soon doesn’t really help. My second supplementary is simply this: would the Cabinet Member answer whether we as a council would suffer any liability should an incident like this happen again and this time, unfortunately, someone were to die whilst we were waiting for the council to do something about parking?”

80.27 Councillor Theobald replied, “Well, I might have knowledge of certain things, Mr Mayor, but I am not a lawyer and I can’t answer that.”

80.28 (f) Councillor Duncan asked:

“Following the tragic death of a newspaper vendor during recent protests in London, and the alleged assault of a Brighton woman at a vigil in his honour, would the Cabinet Member for Community Safety express her support for a different approach to policing protests in Brighton and Hove, and ask Sussex Police to consider how they would plan to approach the policing of any protests within Brighton and Hove, so as not to use the technique of ‘kettling’ protestors – or confiscating any photographic equipment – at least until the Independent Police Complaints Commission has ruled on the appropriateness of such techniques?”

80.29 Councillor Simson replied,

“Thank you for your question. I am of course aware of the considerable publicity associated with recent events in London but the issues raised in your question are very much operational matters for Sussex Police and not council procedures. I have no reason to believe that Sussex Police will not ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for any eventuality that may arise within the city. Furthermore, I would suggest that you don’t pre-empt the outcome of the ongoing Independent Police Complaints Commission’s inquiry into the appropriateness of different policing techniques.”

80.30 Councillor Duncan asked a supplementary question, “I just want to say thank you to Councillor Simson for the reply and the advice contained therein but my original question asked whether Councillor Simson would express support for a different approach to policing protests in Brighton and Hove from that recently used in London. From her answer I’m really not entirely sure.

Is Councillor Simson saying she doesn’t consider policing matters at all within her remit or that she just doesn’t agree that we should take a different approach here in Brighton and Hove to that taken in London?”

80.31 Councillor Simson replied, “As I said in my original answer to the question these are police operational issues and I am surprised that Councillor Duncan, being one of this council’s representatives on the Police Authority, did not direct his question at them, rather than me.”

- 80.32 Councillor Janio asked a further supplementary question, "Would the Cabinet Member agree that when Members represent the council on outside bodies, such as the Police Authority, it is important that they act with propriety and with the interests and reputation of the council in mind at all times?"
- 80.33 Councillor Simson replied, "Following the receipt of this question I did do some research on the internet as I was curious to know what was expected of our Members that we actually put on to the Police Authority and some of the things that they are expected to do is to make sure that we have an efficient and effective local police force, to set local policing priorities, to monitor everything the police do and to oversee complaints against the police and disciplines against senior officers.

That is what I would expect one of our Members who sits on that Authority to do but having done some further research I noticed on Councillor Duncan's blog site that he speaks about and I quote: 'A police force that is increasingly content to break the law and then lie about it.' He also says: 'We know that when protests turn ugly it's usually because it's the police that kick things off' and I am quoting directly. On Tuesday, 31 March, even before the G20 protest, he wrote on his blog site: 'As police and demonstrators prepare to clash in the City of London tomorrow during a wave of protests ahead of Thursday's summit, I can't help fearing that the police will be responsible for any disorder that erupts and I'll be going along and trying to dodge any disorder the police and media spark up.' All this from a Councillor who represents the council on the Police Authority.

What's even more worrying is that he is also promoting the 'Smash EDO' May Day events. They don't call them protests but we all know that's what they are very likely to be as on their website they state: 'come dance and fight'. This could well bring major damage and disruption to our city on a day when thousands of families will be enjoying the Bank Holiday break.

Is this how our elected Members should be promoting the city? I don't think so!"

- 80.34 Councillor Duncan asked that he be able to make a point of clarification, which was accepted by the Mayor and Councillor Duncan stated that, "There were two allegations made which I would like to explain personally.

The first is that those comments were, of course, taken from my blog site. They were written before the G20 protests; they were comments about the Metropolitan Police, not about Sussex Police. They were in the context of media reports about the way the Metropolitan Police were preparing to handle things. Nothing whatsoever to do with my role on Sussex Police Authority.

On the second matter, it's just simply untrue and I will be taking legal advice as to whether or not it's appropriate in this Council Chamber. I don't believe there is universal privilege to say whatever Members like, whether or not it's true, and I am not promoting Monday's events at all. I have been working very hard, Members will be pleased to hear, with the Police Authority, with senior police officers to try and make sure there is absolutely no disruption or trouble on Monday to any businesses, people, police officers or peaceful demonstrators at Monday's events."

80.35 (g) Councillor Mitchell asked:

“Could the Cabinet Member for Central Services please clarify whether it is the council’s policy for their partnering contractors, Mears and Keir, to repair back pathways as well as front?”

80.36 Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing replied,

“I can confirm that it is council repairs policy to carry out Health and Safety repairs to make safe all pathways within the curtilage of council housing buildings. The work is carried out through our partnering contractors. This action is specific to works installed and maintained by the council to facilitate safe access to the front and/or rear entrance of a residential council property.

Where a resident may have installed a patio or hard standing themselves within the curtilage we would recharge the cost of any remedial works required.”

80.37 Councillor Mitchell asked a supplementary question, “I would like to thank Councillor Caulfield for the clarification that is contained in her response. I do have a further supplementary question and I was just wondering if she could briefly outline what system of financial controls are retained by the council in the event of one of the council’s contractors carrying out repairs that are not in accordance with council policy?”

80.38 Councillor Caulfield replied, “Unfortunately, in the contracts that we are working to at the moment, which were devised by the previous Administration, there are very few financial restrictions and controls that we can put upon contractors. That’s why we are taking great time and detail and legal advice when drawing up the ten year contracts that will be going through next year so that we do have some financial control over our contractors.”

80.39 (h) Councillor Turton asked:

“Could the Cabinet Member for Central Services please tell us what levels of quality assurance are the council’s contractors, Mears and Keir, measured against?”

80.40 Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council replied,

“In terms of quality assurance, the contractors have a recruitment and training policy that is applied to all trades staff they engage/recruit to work upon Brighton & Hove Council properties. Trades employed by the contractors, having been required to meet competency, quality and customer service standards at employment stage, are also subject to frequent review/refresher quality standard courses throughout the life of a contract. Staff employed by the council to monitor the contractors are also required to meet competency, quality and customer service standards. The council monitor and control internal staff competencies through the Performance & Development Planning Scheme.

Within the current repairs & maintenance contract, British Standard (BS) of quality is specified in terms of materials to be used and competency qualifications of labour applications applied to the contract. Work is measured, assessed and inspected to

meet current legislation, material usage and the quality of the finished product and surrounding environment. Where a stand alone replacement of works takes place (such as a new kitchen or bathroom) then the measurement of quality is as if it was a new build product.

However, problems do sometimes occur with the aesthetics of finished work. The existing maintenance contract is very prescriptive to the contractors and does not allow or afford them the freedom to seek more acceptable and/or more pleasing finished standards. The new housing procurement contract that commences in April 2010 has been developed with a focus upon improving the quality through a zero defects, 'right first time' approach, requiring the contractor to consistently deliver on Quality, Customer Service and overall value for money."

- 80.41 Councillor Turton asked a supplementary question, "Thank you Councillor Mears for the answer which is drafted for you by officers which, unfortunately, would fail to gain any crystal mark for clarity in the use of plain English. The issue is that the contract with Mears is tendered on a lump sum basis not by individual call-out and result but is it not the case that this offers little incentive for meaningful, individual repairs to be of good quality. Now the properties in Wiston Road have been visited: I would like to say visited and repairs done but actually on inspection of those our own Trading Standards Department would probably be forced to prosecute for the very poor quality control of the work done.

I would invite Councillor Mears, if she is willing and able to do so, to join me on a walk door to door of properties in Wiston Road to inspect the deeply poor workmanship and quality provided by the contractor, undertaken on behalf of the council on behalf of our residents and tenants?"

- 80.42 Councillor Mears replied, "I think just at the beginning I would like to give clarification as the name is similar to mine but actually I have no connection with this company in any way, shape or form. It was a very interesting question actually from Councillor Turton, bearing in mind I do know the Ward very, very well as I was previously a Ward Councillor under the old Brighton Council in that area and I can understand his frustration, bearing in mind that we are running contracts that were set under the previous Administration.

I do understand tenants' frustration with this contract that was set under the previous Administration which actually has caused tremendous problems. Coming into Administration our officers have worked extremely hard to improve the contract performance, Mr Mayor, and I am more than happy to go and walk round Whitehawk and I probably can show Councillor Turton places that even he doesn't recognise."

- 80.43 Councillor Alford asked a further supplementary question, "Could the Leader of the Council actually confirm when this contract was let?"

- 80.44 Councillor Mears replied, "This contract actually has quite a history and there are Members in this Chamber that previously sat on the old Housing Committee, I can see Councillor Elgood and Councillor Randall, who had a very extensive debate on this contract before it was let. I personally presented a petition to Council from tenants that were very concerned about the letting of this contract because they had not been

involved but at the time we did lose the then Chairman of Housing and the Deputy Chairman of Housing and we acquired a new Chairman of Housing whose objective was to push through the contract and we had a succession of dates.

It went to Housing Management; it went to Housing Committee in 2006 on 21 September; it came to Policy & Resources on 28 September 2006. We actually had a Special Policy & Resources meeting on 5 October 2006 to go through this contract because of the concerns by Opposition Councillors that the Administration and particularly the then Chairman of Housing was pushing through a contract which other Councillors did not feel was suitable, was not watertight and would not protect our tenants' interests.

Therefore, to answer Councillor Alford's question, I was deeply concerned about this contract at the time as were many other Members that are stood in this Chamber. The request from myself at Policy & Resources was for the then Chairman of Housing to write personally to every Member of Policy & Resources to ensure Members that he would at that time take personal control and supervision of that contract. Unfortunately, as we have seen as that contract has run we have inherited more serious problems but I can assure the Chamber through you, Mr Mayor, that there is improvement in the contract. As my colleague, Councillor Caulfield, has already alluded to, we will be letting new contracts next year that have been fully consulted with tenants but are far better contracts that we would ensure that when a contractor goes into any of our tenants' homes we expect the standard that any Member in this Chamber would want in their own home."

80.45 (i) Councillor Lepper asked:

"Could the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, please tell us how far planning with the PCT has got, with regards to the funding being made available by the government for additional breaks for carers, which is estimated at £821,000 over the next two years?"

80.46 Councillor Ken Norman replied,

"The National Strategy indicated that £150m funding would be included in baseline funding allocations for PCTs to support implementation of the strategy in respect of breaks and other services for carers in 2009/10 and 2010/11. This funding is not ring-fenced and is not a specific allocation to individual PCTs.

It is possible for the PCT to estimate its share of the £150m at around £850,000 over the two years – with a greater proportion in the second year. At present, this investment is not explicitly identified in PCT plans – but there is an assumption within plans that the PCT will be releasing resources for targeted investment in priority areas over the year, of which services for carers is one.

The City Council and PCT have a jointly funded Joint Commissioner for Carers' Services and joint processes which ensure a co-ordinated approach to carers' issues. The postholder is based in Adult Social Care but works closely with colleagues at the PCT to ensure that effective links are made into all strategic developments. Part of this is the joint council/PCT plan in the form of a new Carers' Development and Commissioning

Strategy. A business case for additional funding from the PCT to support the revised strategy has been completed.”

- 80.47 Councillor Lepper asked a supplementary question, “Can I thank Councillor Norman for his fulsome reply, as always, far more information than I actually asked for and I am very grateful for that. Of course, the additional information I didn’t ask for gives me even more cause for concern now.

I have actually seen the draft Carers’ Development and Commissioning Strategy which, it has been pointed out, is jointly funded and jointly commissioned by this council and the PCT but I am aware that some carers’ organisations have expressed concern over this fact that the funding is not ring-fenced. I would like to seek assurances from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health, especially in view of his answer to me, that when the consultation with local carers and their organisations has been carried out, that all of the £274,000 this year and the whole of the £547,000 next year will all be spent on implementing the strategy?”

- 80.48 Councillor Ken Norman replied, “The detail contained in my original answer was as up to date as I could possibly give you today. There are moves to go ahead. Yes, you are right about the draft situation and it is going out to consultation. I will keep everybody informed in this Chamber of any changes or alterations and progress as we move forward.”

- 80.49 (j) Councillor Harmer-Strange asked:

“Could the Cabinet Member for Finance state the current level of Brighton & Hove City Council’s debt?”

- 80.50 Councillor Young replied,

“The level of council debt outstanding reduced by 16.2% between 31 March 2007 and 31 March 2009.”

- 80.51 Councillor Harmer-Strange asked a supplementary question, “I would like to thank the Cabinet Member for her brief answer but could she explain what the benefits are of repaying debt early in this way?”

- 80.52 Councillor Young replied, “Yes, I would be glad to. As part of this Administration’s responsible and prudent approach to the public finances and our strategies to reduce risks on investments we are currently prioritising the reduction of our debt. Every pound we save on having to make interest payments on our debt is an extra pound to invest in the frontline services or keeping council tax down. There is also a trade-off between the interest rate at which the council can invest money and the interest rate at which the council borrows money. At the present time with the financial turbulence this strategy makes even more sense. For example, the average rate of interest on our borrowing is currently at 4.75%, whereas short term investment rates are less than 1%.

In 2008-09 the amount set aside to repay debt was just over £7 million and this represents only 1% of the gross revenue budget of the council. Not only are we able to reduce our debt but we have also been able to deliver the smallest increase in council

tax in the history of this council, whilst maintaining investment in frontline services and capital projects, such as the restoration of the bandstand and the Madeira lift.”

80.53 Councillor Oxley asked a further supplementary question, “Could I invite the Cabinet Member to contrast the situation locally regarding our local government debt in Brighton and Hove and the national government debt picture as unveiled last week by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his budget?”

80.54 Councillor Young replied, “I would be pleased to contrast our responsible approach to public money with that of the national Labour Government. Their profligacy has led to quite staggering public finance figures and by the government’s own predictions national debt is set to reach almost £1.4 trillion by 2013-14. This compares with the figure of £350 billion bequeathed to them by the previous Conservative Government in 1997 and it is worth pointing out that almost all independent forecasters reckon that the government’s predictions on economic growth for the next few years are wildly optimistic.

The real picture is likely to be much worse - £1.4 trillion represents 76.2% of gross domestic product, almost twice the 40% limit set by Gordon Brown’s golden rule for economic management. Simply paying the interest on the national debt will cost taxpayers £42.9 million in 2010-11, which is more than the annual budget of the Ministry of Defence. By anyone’s standards this is appalling financial management.”

81. REPORTS OF THE CABINET, CABINET MEMBER MEETINGS AND COMMITTEES.

(a) Callover

81.1 The following items on the agenda were reserved for discussion:

Item 82 – Code of Corporate Governance

Item 84 – Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2009/10

Item 85 – Six Month Review of the Constitution

Item 86 – Statutory Crime & Disorder Committee

(b) Receipt and/or Approval of Reports

81.2 The Acting Chief Executive confirmed that Item No’s 82, 84, 85 and 86 had been reserved for discussion and that the Health & Safety Annual Service Plan 2009/10, Item 83 on the agenda with the recommendations therein be approved and adopted.

(c) Oral Questions from Members

81.3 The Mayor noted that there were no oral questions.

81.4 The Mayor stated that he would take item 85 next following a request from Councillor Taylor who was unable to remain after the scheduled refreshment break.

82. CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- 82.1 Councillor Ann Norman formally moved the report and the recommendation that the revised Code of Corporate Governance be approved and noted that the Governance Committee had received the report at its meeting on the 28 April, an extract of which had been circulated as part of the addendum papers.
- 82.2 Councillor Hamilton supported the proposal and noted that the Audit Committee had recommended that the revised Code be approved, as detailed in the extract from the meeting held on the 31st March 2009. He noted that whilst it was not compulsory to review the code, it was highly recommended by the Audit Commission as it would be reflected in the Authority's Comprehensive Area Assessment.
- 82.3 Councillor Oxley welcomed the report and stated that he hoped it would be a 'living' document which was regularly referred to and updated and supported by all Members.
- 82.4 The Mayor noted that the recommendation of the Audit Committee had been moved and sought confirmation from the Council.
- 82.5 **RESOLVED** – That the revised Code of Corporate Governance be adopted.

83. HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN 2009/10

- 83.1 **RESOLVED** – That the Health & Safety Annual Service Plan 2009/10 be approved.

84. OFFICIAL FEED AND FOOD CONTROLS SERVICE PLAN 2009/10

- 84.1 Councillor Theobald introduced the report and formally moved the recommendation that the Service Plan be approved. He believed both the Health & Safety Annual Service Plan and the Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan were excellent documents and the culmination of the excellent work undertaken by officers within those service areas.
- 84.2 Councillors Mitchell, Randall and Elgood welcomed the report and stated that they wished to pay tribute to the excellent work undertaken by the officers concerned on behalf of their respective Groups.
- 84.3 The Mayor noted that the recommendation of the report had been moved and sought confirmation from the council.
- 84.4 **RESOLVED** – That the Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2009/10 be approved.

85. SIX MONTH REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Note: This item was taken directly after Item 81 on the agenda but is shown in consecutive order for the numbering of the minutes.

- 85.1 Councillor Ann Norman introduced the report and the recommendations of the Governance Committee, which were detailed in the extract from the meeting, held on the 10th March. She stated that the report had been to both the Cabinet and the Governance Committee and had proved to be a more in-depth review of the constitution than had been anticipated. She stated that the various responses received had been carefully considered and a number of aspects had been accommodated or were now recommended for approval by the council. She wished to thank the officers involved in the review for their work, and noted that work would begin on the 12-month review which would enable further consideration of matters raised previously and any other aspects that were raised. Councillor Norman noted that within the addendum papers an additional recommendation was detailed in respect of the proposed change of name for the Culture Directorate to that of Culture and Enterprise and in respect of the amendment put forward by Councillor Watkins, she was happy to accept it and therefore wished to formally move the recommendations as amended.
- 85.2 Councillor Smart formally seconded the motion to approve the recommendations as amended.
- 85.3 Councillor Watkins stated that he wished to move the amendment, which called for the establishment of an all-party working group to examine how community groups could be involved in the development of service delivery by the council. He noted that whilst the City Inclusion Partnership was proving to be an excellent vehicle, there was some concern over the loss of the Equalities Forum, which had provided an important link with the communities of interest and an ability to raise and discuss matters, something which had been lost with the establishment of the Partnership.
- 85.4 Councillor McCaffery formally seconded the amendment and stated the Community Engagement Framework was an excellent document, but she felt that there was a need to engage with the community groups at a similar level to that at the Equalities Forum and she hoped this could be achieved as part of the 12-month review of the constitution.
- 85.5 Councillor Fryer welcomed the amendment and stated that she hoped it would lead to further changes being made to enable greater engagement and involvement with the community groups and a public forum for the consideration of equality issues.
- 85.6 Councillor Oxley stated that as the previous Leader of the Council who oversaw the introduction of the new constitution, he had been keen to ensure the decision-making process remained open and transparent. He believed this had been achieved and wished to thank Councillor Norman and the members of the Governance Committee for their work in respect of the 6-month review of the constitution. He hoped that all Members would use the options open to them to contribute to the decision-making process, such as questions to Cabinet and/or Cabinet Member meetings and noted that the opposition groups held 4 out of the 6 Chairs of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees. He believed the proposed amendment would allow for further consideration of how community groups could be involved and hoped that the 12-month review would also look at how better to call outside bodies to account as part of the scrutiny process.
- 85.7 Councillor Elgood stated that he believed there was a void in relation to the question of equalities issues with the loss of the Equalities Forum and he hoped the 12-month

review would address this. He also felt that further consideration needed to be given to Neighbourhood Forums and the use of the Forward Plan, which should have a greater level of detail in terms of items coming forward for decision.

85.8 Councillor Taylor stated that he felt the 6-month review had missed an opportunity to address certain issues such as the involvement of community groups and had failed to address the concerns raised by the Green Group over the need for a separate Overview & Scrutiny Committee for Community Safety. He hoped that these matters would be taken forward as part of the 12-month review.

85.9 Councillor Simson stated that she had taken on the responsibilities for Inclusion and Equalities and would ensure matters were raised at Cabinet. She believed the Community Engagement Framework would enable greater involvement and understanding and that the City Inclusion Partnership was beginning to have a positive effect.

85.10 Councillor Ann Norman noted the comments and stated that the Governance Committee had been involved throughout the process of the 6-month review and she felt had contributed to the recommendations that came forward. She hoped that the 12-month review would provide the opportunity to revisit some issues and consider other aspects which would lead to positive changes where they were needed. In the meantime she was happy to move the recommendations as amended.

85.11 The Mayor noted that the recommendations together with the amendment had been moved and sought confirmation from the council.

85.12 **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the proposals for amendments to the Constitution as set out at paragraphs 4.2, 4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.6, 4.4.7 and 4.4.9 be approved;
- (2) That the change of name of the Directorate of Culture to Culture and Enterprise to reflect the role of the department in relation to economic development and support to local businesses be approved; and
- (3) That an all-party working group be set up to examine how a better focus can be given to the involvement of community groups and their representatives within the council's service delivery and to allow for issues relating to this to be easily raised and addressed, and for the recommendations from this group to be fed directly into the consultation on the 12-month review.

Refreshment Break

85.13 The Mayor then adjourned the meeting at 6.20pm for the refreshment break.

85.14 The Mayor reconvened the meeting at 6.55pm and proceeded to take Item 82 as listed on the agenda.

86. STATUTORY CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE

- 86.1 Councillor Ann Norman formally moved the report and the recommendations of the Governance Committee, which were detailed in the extract from the meeting, held on the 28th April and had been circulated as part of the addendum papers. She stated that the council was required to establish a Crime & Disorder Committee, and having considered various options it was felt that the Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC), should be designated as having responsibility for Crime & Disorder. The Community Safety Forum would remain in place and continue to operate as it has, whilst having the ability to refer matters onto the ECSOSC for consideration. She also noted that the proposed arrangements could be reviewed as part of the 12-month review of the constitution and if necessary any amendments put forward for consideration by the council in due course.
- 86.2 Councillor Oxley stated that the proposals enabled the council to fulfil the legal requirements, whilst retaining the Community Safety Forum in its current form.
- 86.3 Councillor Duncan accepted that the legal requirement was met, but queried whether the arrangements would have been operating sufficiently for them to be included in the 12-month review. He believed that there was a need for a separate Crime & Disorder Committee, especially given the current work load of the ECSOSC. He noted that the Cabinet portfolios for Environment and Community Safety had recently been split and suggested this should be reflected in the scrutiny set up. He therefore wished to move an amendment as detailed in the addendum papers which had been circulated separately.
- 86.4 Councillor Kennedy formally seconded the amendment.
- 86.5 Councillor Mitchell stated that it was difficult to take on board new legislative requirements which directly affected the way in which the council operated. The creation of the Community Safety Forum in 1998 had been an innovative step by the then Brighton Borough Council and it had grown from strength to strength to become an integral part of the council. She did not therefore feel that it should become the formal Crime & Disorder Committee as this would disengage its members and its effectiveness. It was therefore necessary to look at what options were available and she believed that the proposal to use the ECSOSC was a good one at this point in time. It also enabled the situation to be reviewed as part of the 12-month review of the constitution.
- 86.6 Councillor Elgood stated that he had some sympathy with the proposed amendment and felt that the community representatives could sit on a formal committee. He was also concerned that only the Leader and Opposition Leader had been consulted on the matter and hoped minority group Leaders would be included in the future.
- 86.7 Councillor Simson noted the comments and stated that she believed the Community Safety Forum had a key role to play and was hopeful that its meetings could be held out in community venues in the future. She felt that the proposal outlined in the report was the right way forward and hoped Members would support it.
- 86.8 The Mayor noted that an amendment had been moved by Councillor Duncan and put the amendment to the vote, which was lost.

86.9 The Mayor then put the recommendations as moved to the vote.

86.10 **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC) be designated as the council's Crime & Disorder Committee;
- (2) That the protocol detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, governing the interface between the Community Safety Forum and ECSOSC be adopted;
- (3) That the Chair of ESCOSC (being the Chair also of the Crime & Disorder Committee), become a member of the Community Safety Forum;
- (4) That the Head of Law be authorised to put these arrangements into effect, following Full Council approval, including any necessary amendments to the council's constitution; and
- (5) That the Had of Law be instructed to monitor the effectiveness of the arrangements implemented under resolutions (1) and (2) above, and, if appropriate, to submit a report to the Governance Committee, as part of the council's 12-month review of the constitution, or any changes considered necessary.

87. NOTICES OF MOTION.

(a) Neighbourhood Policing, Council Services and Local Action Teams (LATs)

- 87.1 The Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Duncan and seconded by Councillor Kennedy.
- 87.2 Councillor Morgan moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Hamilton which was accepted by Councillor Duncan.
- 87.3 Councillor Simson moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Kemble which was accepted by Councillor Duncan.
- 87.4 The Mayor then put the following Notice of Motion as amended to the vote:

"This Council

Notes

1. That Sussex Police has adopted 'Neighbourhood Policing' as one of its three key priorities – and that the force's Local Policing Plan commits officers to working with communities across the city to help achieve its neighbourhood policing goals of (a) being visible and accountable, and (b) providing a quality response.
2. That a number of Local Action Teams (LATs) have either come into existence – or begun operating in place of a previously existing community group – to facilitate this.

3. The fact that many LATs have decided to broaden their remit into areas outside the scope of policing and this council's community safety team to include other matters relating to community safety: inter alia, licensing, planning, refuse collection and traffic problems and road safety.
4. The engagement of officers of this authority with LAT meetings to answer residents questions about service delivery.

Welcomes

1. The fact that Sussex Police have pledged to engage fully with LATs,
2. The formation of LATs – and the work that communities and members of this council have done and continue to do to allow them to function effectively,
3. The community-led, genuinely democratic, non party-political nature of LATs.

Resolves

1. To ask the Cabinet to acknowledge the work of LATS in reflecting the views of communities and neighbourhoods represented by them;
2. To ask the Cabinet to recognise the independence of LATS from the City Council and that each LAT should have the autonomy to fix its own remit and to work together with other community organisations;
3. To ask that that the Cabinet Member responsible for community safety considers working with the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership to identify ways of supporting LATS;
4. To ask the Acting Chief Executive to write to the Chief Constable of Sussex, Martin Richards QPM, congratulating him on his commitment to neighbourhood policing and his officers' and PCSOs' pledges to attend future LAT meetings; and
5. To ask the Cabinet to consider whether to provide proactive publicity for LATs on the council website and publications to encourage a greater involvement from the community."

87.5 The motion was carried.

(b) Electricity Internet

87.6 The Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Oxley and seconded by Councillor Cobb.

87.7 Councillor Steedman moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Wakefield-Jarrett, which was put to the vote by the Mayor and carried.

87.8 The Mayor then put the following Notice of Motion as amended to the vote:

“This Council notes that the Conservative Party has recently issued a green paper - The Low Carbon Economy – Security, Stability and Growth – which borrows Green Party proposals to create an electricity internet. An electricity internet has the potential to hugely improve the efficiency of electricity generation and consumption and to help unlock large-scale use of renewable energy in Brighton & Hove in particular and the UK in general.

This Council notes that the fundamental architecture of the generation and consumption of electricity in the UK has changed little since the National Grid was first established in the 1930s, and is based on a centralised system of command and control. There is little scope to intelligently balance capacity and demand and around two thirds of energy used in large, centralised power stations never reaches the consumer.

The proposals contained in the paper seek to address these long-standing problems through:

- transforming electricity networks with ‘smart grid’ and ‘smart meter’ technology so that the use of electricity for a wide range of household and workplace appliances can be tailored automatically to match the supply
- creating a decentralised micro-generation energy revolution by introducing a system of ‘feed in tariffs’ for electricity generation as has occurred in countries such as Germany
- vastly expanding the amount of offshore wind and marine power by incentivising the construction of a new network of under-sea Direct Current cables
- incentivising electricity network operators to establish a new national recharging network for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles

This Council notes that the Conservative Party paper fails to explain how these policies would be implemented. The Conservative Government’s privatisation of the electricity supply system has left their proposals at the mercy of the shareholders of the National Grid and energy supply companies. Plans for smart metering in the UK have been bogged down in arguments between the regulator, Ofgem, and the big six energy suppliers for almost five years.

This Council further notes that the Conservative Party paper fails to set out the costs of these policies or explain how they would be paid for. It is crucial that these proposals be funded fairly, and not by loading additional, disproportionate costs onto the energy bills of the poorest.

This Council believes that a transformation on this scale would, depending on how it is implemented and financed, benefit

- (i) the consumers of Brighton & Hove, through lowering energy bills and giving them the capacity to generate and sell electricity;
- (ii) the global climate, by reducing carbon emissions;
- (iii) the U.K. population as a whole by enhancing energy security.

Furthermore, this Council believes that the electricity internet proposals would be very popular in Brighton & Hove given the significant local interest there is in the conservation of natural resources.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- endorse proposals to create a decentralised electricity grid.
- Instruct the Acting Chief Executive to write to the Shadow Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change – Greg Clark MP - the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change – Ed Miliband MP - and the City's 3 MPs confirming the Council's support for smart, decentralised electricity grid and a local energy revolution, and asking Mr Clark to set out how he sees these policies being implemented in today's privatised energy markets and paid for in a fair way.
- Ask the Lead Member for Sustainability to examine possible sources of funding which could enable local residents to benefit from an electricity internet in the future."

87.9 The motion was carried.

(c) Financial Services

87.10 The Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Randall and seconded by Councillor Kennedy.

87.11 Councillor Allen moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Hawkes, which was accepted by Councillor Randall.

87.12 The Mayor then put the following Notice of Motion as amended to the vote:

"This council welcomes the support that Brighton and Hove City Council is giving to the East Sussex Credit Union.

It also notes that:

- Two million people in the UK do not have bank accounts
- Three million people do not have access to conventional credit and depend on licensed sub-prime market lenders, many of whom operate on the doorstep
- On average those who borrow from doorstep lenders pay £65 in interest for every £100 they borrow
- Consumers on low incomes are hit hardest by the recession as credit dries up
- Formal lending had dropped by 60 per cent since the recession began.

It therefore calls on the council's Acting Chief Executive to write to Alistair Darling, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, urging them to:

1. Use the Government's stake in high street banks to make loans and other financial services available from conventional sources to those on lower incomes,

2. Give more support to credit unions, the Post Office and community finance initiatives to make financial services available to those on lower incomes, whilst recognising the £38 million investment for 2008-11 from the Government and the extra £18.75 million investment to the Growth Fund, announced in the most recent budget, which will enable lenders to make an additional 85,000 loans to the financially excluded by 2011.
3. Cap the interest rates charged by doorstep and other sub-prime market lenders in line with many EU countries, US states, Canada and Australia.”

87.13 **The motion was carried.**

(d) Support Apprenticeship Programmes in Brighton and Hove

87.14 The Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Oxley and seconded by Councillor Cobb.

87.15 Councillor Fallon-Khan moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Kemble, which was put to the vote by the Mayor and lost.

87.16 The Mayor then put the following Notice of Motion to the vote:

“The number of people completing apprenticeships in England has risen from 50,000 to 112,000 in the last 4 years, due to the Government’s rapid expansion of apprenticeships.

Brighton and Hove has seen some of the biggest increases in the numbers of completed apprenticeships in the country. Apprenticeships in Hove alone have increased by over 500%.

Nationally, over 130,000 employers now offer apprenticeships across 80 different industry sectors including retail, manufacturing and the public sector and it is widely recognised that apprenticeships offer a valuable and worthwhile contribution to business, especially during an economic downturn.

This Council notes

- £140m has been made available to fund a further 35,000 apprenticeship places in 2009/10 with 21,000 of these will be in the public sector, across the country.
- Local Authorities like Kent CC, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and Warwickshire have benefitted from apprenticeships.
- The Government is supporting a construction clearing house to help keep apprentices who fear losing their jobs employed and in training.

This Council actively supports the possible advantages and benefits of entering in to an apprenticeship programme. This Council requests that the Acting Chief Executive complete the online enquiry form at

<https://apprenticeships.broadsystem.com/EmployerEnquiryForm.aspx> to get free

information and advice on how the council could benefit more from apprenticeships and how best to promote apprenticeships across the city, amongst local businesses.

This Council requests that Cabinet members consider the following;

- Using the Council's positive influence on more local businesses to encourage the take up of apprenticeship schemes,
- Providing citywide information on the council's website about apprenticeships available in Brighton and Hove,
- Expanding its own apprenticeship programme within the Council and increasing the numbers of apprentices within the Local Authority."

87.17 **The motion was carried.**

88. REFERRED NOTICES OF MOTION REPORTED TO COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION ONLY

88.1 The Mayor noted that the Notice of Motion relating to Senior Staff Salaries, as detailed in the agenda had been referred to the Governance Committee meeting held on the 10 March 2009, and the decision taken was being reported back to the council for information in accordance with Procedural Rule 24.

88.2 **RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

The meeting concluded at 8.50pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of