

Subject: Petitions
Date of Meeting: 11 July 2019
Report of: Monitoring Officer
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To receive any petitions submitted directly to Democratic Services or any e-Petition submitted via the council's website.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.2 That the Committee responds to the petition either by noting it or writing to the petition organiser setting out the Council's views, or where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter which may give consideration to a range of options, including the following:

- taking the action requested in the petition
- considering the petition at a council meeting
- holding an inquiry into the matter
- undertaking research into the matter
- holding a public meeting
- holding a consultation
- holding a meeting with petitioners
- calling a referendum

3. PETITIONS

3.1 (i) Suffragette Banner – Ms D Waldon (Brighton & Hove Women's History Group)

To receive the following petition - signed by 150 people at the time of publication:

B & H Women's History Group Petition: Bring Back our City's Suffragette Banner

Brighton and Hove played a very important part in the struggle for women's suffrage – our right to vote. The magnificent suffragette banner of the Brighton branch of the National Women's Social & Political Union (formed in 1907) is made of beautiful purple twill woven wool, with an applique lettering of cream cotton sateen and white silk-wrapped cotton

cord. However, it is displayed in Manchester, not here in Brighton. Many activists, including Mary Clarke, sister of Emmeline Pankhurst and the first suffragette to die for the cause, worked tirelessly in Brighton to drum up support from local people and to help turn the tide of women's rights.

One of Brighton's Borough Councillors, the late Andy Durr, discovered the banner in a local second-hand shop, and donated or loaned it for safekeeping to the People's History Museum in Manchester. We are convinced that this banner needs to come back home to stand as proud testimony to the work of the women of Brighton & Hove and to educate future generations.

Members of the B&H Women's History Group and those undersigned call on Brighton & Hove Council to negotiate the return of our banner to Brighton & Hove, whether permanently or on loan

3. 2 (ii) Polling Stations at Schools – Ms F Brockwell

To receive the following petition - signed by 353 people at the time of publication:

We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove Council to stop using schools as polling stations for local, national and European elections.

When schools are used as polling stations, the majority have to be shut, to ensure the safeguarding of pupils.

This puts additional pressure on working parents, who struggle to cover the number of school holidays as it is. Parents should not have to pay for childcare or use up annual leave to cover the council using their child's school as a polling station.

Using schools as polling stations also impacts our children's education.

Using the example of May 2019, children at Downs Infants School are due to miss 2 days of schooling per child.

By the council's own admission children " can only miss school if:

- they're too ill to go*
- they're traveling to or from a medical appointment with the GP, hospital or the dentist*
- they're traveling to or from a work experience placement*
- you asked the school for permission, in advance."*

(Taken from <https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools-and->

[learning/absent-school/when-children-can-and-cant-miss-school](#) on
25/04/19)

If parents take their children out of school, they are charged £60 per parent.

Yet parents receive no additional help to cover childcare costs when the school is closed for elections.

Why is one rule for the council, and another for hard-working parents?

For the reasons stated above we petition the council to stop using schools as polling stations for elections.

