

Subject: Adult & Community Learning

Date of Meeting: 27 October 2020

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

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**Action Required of the Audit & Standards Committee**

To receive the request from the Special Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on the 30th July 2020.

Recommendation:

That given the practical, financial and legal implications, the committee requests the Audit & Standards Committee, by way of additional assurance, to request officers to undertake an audit into why it was not possible to implement the decision agreed at the April 30 meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

4.00pm 30 JULY 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING - SKYPE

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Druitt (Joint Deputy Chair), Platts (Opposition Spokesperson), Allcock, Clare, Hugh-Jones, Miller, Moonan, Osborne, Wares and Yates

MINUTE EXTRACT

PART ONE

43 ADULT COMMUNITY & LEARNING

- 43.1 The Interim Director for Families, Children & Learning introduced the report, which provided an update and further recommendations on the future delivery model of the Council's Adult & Community Learning offer. She noted that the council had been unable to secure the necessary arrangements with the Friends Centre and therefore could not support the intentions previously agreed to take the service in-house.
- 43.2 Councillor Clare moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which sought to provide support to those affected by the situation and to enable lessons to be learnt from the process so that matters could be dealt with more effectively in the future.
- 43.3 Councillor Hugh-Jones formally seconded the amendment and reserved her right to speak.
- 43.4 Members of the Committee expressed their concern about how the situation had progressed having come to committee previously with an intention to provide a solution that had then become unviable. It was felt that there was a clear need to look at the lessons to be learnt from this matter and how critical projects can be sustained. There was a need to consider how more could be done in regard to working with the Community & Voluntary Sector so that available funding was utilised effectively rather than various organisations/groups chasing the same limited resources.
- 43.5 Councillor Hugh-Jones noted that both the Labour and Conservative Groups had expressed their support for the amendment and for it to be taken as a cross-party amendment. She stated that she was happy to accept the request to make it a cross-party amendment and welcomed the approach of collaboration.
- 43.6 Councillor Clare stated that she was also willing to revise the amendment so that it was a cross-party amendment and sought the committee's agreement to the change.

- 43.7 The Chair noted that the Committee wished to accept the revision to the amendment and therefore put the cross-party amendment to the vote which was carried.
- 43.8 The Chair then put the recommendations as amended to the vote which were carried.
- 43.9 **RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the family learning element of the adult education budget which supports the city's vulnerable families will be delivered directly by the tutors currently employed by the council using online or distanced based learning methods where possible. This will involve the TUPE of relevant staff from the Friends Centre;
 - (2) That in order to retain and secure the council's ESFA grant for adult education for the academic year 2020/21 sub-contracting arrangements should be put in place. This will provide a suitable timeframe in which to plan and implement measures which will deliver a sustainable service for the council going forward;
 - (3) That it be noted that the £61,030 allocated by committee to support the transition to an in-house adult and community learning service will not be required unless alternative delivery premises are secured;
 - (4) That the committee request officers to urgently explore with Adult and Community Learning partners in the city what provision can be put in place for some of our city's most vulnerable learners as of September 2020, with consideration to the impact of Covid-19 on service delivery; and
 - (5) That given the practical, financial and legal implications, the committee requests the Audit & Standards Committee, by way of additional assurance, to request officers to undertake an audit into why it was not possible to implement the decision agreed at the April 30 meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

4.00pm 30 APRIL 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Platts (Chair) Yates (Deputy Chair), Mac Cafferty (Opposition Spokesperson), Bell (Group Spokesperson), Allcock, Clare, Gibson, Moonan, Miller and Shanks.

PART ONE

167 ADULT & COMMUNITY LEARNING

- 167.1 The Interim Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning introduced the report concerning the future delivery model of the Council's Adult & Community Learning offer funded by the Education & Skills Funding Agency. She noted that the Housing Committee had agreed to the use of HRA funding for Year 1.
- 167.2 Councillor Shanks welcomed the report and formally moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which sought to enable alternative options to be looked at.
- 167.3 Councillor Clare formally seconded the amendment.
- 167.4 Councillor Bell stated that he fully supported the scheme although was concerned about the call on HRA funding and questioned whether it would be more appropriate to use the General Fund.
- 167.5 The Acting Chief Finance Officer stated that the HRA was to be used for then benefit of tenants and this had been demonstrated in the report. However, the decision was for Members although the current pressures on the General Fund should be taken into consideration as outlined in the options listed in the report.
- 167.6 Councillor Allcock noted that the Housing Committee had agreed to the funding from the HRA for the first year and welcomed the Green Group's amendment. He believed there was a need for the service in the city and noted the support of the Trustees from the Friend's Centre.
- 167.7 Councillor Gibson stated that any future funding needed to be proportionate to the tenants' benefits and future consultation on how the service would be provided needed to be improved. He hoped that the service could be turned around and could then continue to provide the important support to adults in the city.

167.8 Councillor Miller expressed some reservations about the use of HRA and noted that some people would effectively be paying twice for the service. He was also concerned about funding elements and welcomed the Green amendment.

167.9 Councillor Moonan acknowledged the need to look at the funding elements and stated that the service provided an important second opportunity to develop skills and knowledge and hoped that it could be supported.

167.10 The Chair noted the comments and put the Green Group's amendment to the vote which was carried unanimously.

167.11 The Chair then put the recommendations to the vote, noting that the recommendation to use the £40k funding from the HRA in Year 1 was being put forward as the preferred option.

167.12 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That a contribution of £40,000 from the HRA be set aside in the 2020/21 financial year only to support the funding requirements detailed in Option 1 in the report and subject to recommendation 3 below, and that any future HRA contributions be conditional on tenants support evidenced by consultation and that should this consultation be favourable, the HRA contribution be proportionate to the established benefits derived by tenants from these services, as also described in paragraph 3.41 of the report;
- (2) That the Adult and Community Learning be brought in-house following the expiry of the current arrangements on 31st July 2020;
- (3) That additional funding to be allocated to the Families, Children and Learning Directorate to cover the associated costs of bringing delivery in-house based on the option below be approved:
 - (i) Funding anticipated being in the region of £61,030 in year 1, based on funding of £20,000 each for Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (Hangleton and Knoll and Whitehawk Inn) is provided by the Housing Revenue Account; and
 - (ii) If necessary, to explore other options to mitigate any loss of NLDC funding to the Hangleton and Knoll and Whitehawk Inn project resulting from the in-house proposal moving beyond year one, should no further funding be obtained from the HRA in future years .

Note: the costs for year two onwards for both options is dependent on securing suitable accommodation within the council.

- (4) That delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment & Culture to:
 - (i) Secure a 1year lease or license as appropriate on Isetta Square from the Friends Centre; and

- (ii) Take any other steps necessary to implement the recommendations in this report.
- (5) That delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning to:
 - (i) Take forward TUPE arrangements to facilitate the in-house provision of community learning currently delivered by the Friends Centre.
 - (ii) Take forward the option to bring in-house two externally funded projects, Step by Step and Get Socially Active projects and manage TUPE arrangements and subsequent liaison with funders.
 - (iii) Take any other steps necessary to implement the recommendations in this report including a comprehensive review of the service after one and three years of operation to assess value for money, opportunities for efficiencies, investment and growth opportunities, performance, satisfaction, and impact on equalities data.
- (6) That delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director for Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities to take forward the recommendation to fund Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities from the Housing Revenue Account of £40,000; and
- (7) That the Audit & Standards Committee receive a report, to ensure good financial governance for the city council.