

Subject:	Open a New Homeless Shelter in Morley Street, Brighton - Items referred from the Special Council meeting held on the 13 August 2020		
Date of Meeting:	3 December 2020		
Report of:	Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law		
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To receive the following petition for consideration which was debated at and referred from the Council meeting held on the 22 October 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 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. CONTEXT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The petition is detailed below:

OPEN A NEW HOMELESS SHELTER IN MORELY STREET, BRIGHTON

- 3.1.1 Purchase the unoccupied building known as 'PsychoSocial' 1-2 Morley Street BN2 9RA and open it as a permanent shelter for women and men who are homeless or about to become homeless.

Lead Petitioner – Barry Hughes

Additional Information:

3.1.2 Why is this important?

The building will make a big advance towards ending rough sleeping in Brighton & Hove by 2020 and be self-financing with housing benefits and volunteers.

The building at 1-2 Morley Street, known as 'PsychoSocial', is currently unoccupied, meaning it would be easy for the council to purchase. It is also in a great location, as it is close to an excellent health centre, thereby lightening the load on A&E at the hospital.

We've had two major successes so far in improving and increasing the amount of night shelters for Brighton's homeless. First of all, in 2017, we won a campaign for Brighton and Hove Council to commit to opening night shelters for rough sleepers. Then we won a campaign for Brighton and Hove Council to have shelters open 365 days a year. These achievements only came after thousands of us signed a petition. Brighton Centre should be open this November (2018) but by the middle of winter users will have to relocate to other venues. Now, we need a permanent shelter for Brighton's homeless, and Morley Street is the perfect location.

3.2 An extract from the minutes of the council meeting held on the 13 August 2020 is detailed below for information:

COUNCIL

4.30pm 22 OCTOBER 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING - TEAMS

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Robins (Chair), Mears (Deputy Chair), Allcock, Appich, Atkinson, Bagaeen, Barnett, Bell, Brennan, Brown, Childs, Clare, Davis, Deane, Druitt, Ebel, Evans, Fishleigh, Fowler, Gibson, Grimshaw, Hamilton, Heley, Henry, Hill, Hills, Hugh-Jones, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Lloyd, Mac Cafferty, McNair, Miller, Moonan, Nemeth, Nield, O'Quinn, Osborne, Peltzer Dunn, Phillips, Pissaridou, Platts, Powell, Rainey, Shanks, Simson, C Theobald, Wares, West, Wilkinson and Williams.

PART ONE

43 PETITIONS FOR DEBATE.

(2) OPEN A NEW HOMELESS SHELTER IN MORLEY STREET, BRIGHTON

43.14 The Mayor stated that where a petition secured 1,250 or more signatures it could be debated at the council meeting. He had been made aware of three such petitions and would take each in turn. However, he also noted that since the publication of the agenda the third petition, concerning the Brighton & Hove Greyhound Stadium had been withdrawn.

- 43.15 He noted that there was amendment to the cover reports' recommendation for the first petition which would be taken as part of the debate on the matter in question.
- 43.14 The Mayor then invited Mr. Barry Hughes to present the petition which called on the council to purchase an empty property in Morley Street so that it could become a new homeless shelter.
- 43.15 Mr. Hughes thanked the Mayor and stated that the petition which had been signed by 4,519 and started by Mr. John Hadman was seeking the council's support to provide a homeless shelter in the city. The property identified had been vacant for a period of time and rather than continuing to remain vacant it was hoped that the council could purchase it and redevelop it as a shelter for the homeless.
- 43.16 Councillor Gibson thanked Mr. Hughes for joining the meeting and presenting the petition.
- 43.17 Councillor Mears stated that she could not support the petition's request in regard to the property in Morley Street as she understood that the owners were not prepared to sell and had plans for the property which were being taken forward.
- 43.18 Councillor Gibson noted the comments and suggested that the Policy & Resources Committee could consider the general need for the provision of a homeless shelter whilst acknowledging that the property in question was unlikely to be available.
- 43.19 The Mayor thanked Mr. Hughes for joining the meeting and presenting the petition.
- 43.20 The Mayor then put the recommendation to the vote and called on each of the Group Leaders to confirm their position as well as the Groups in turn and each of the Independent Members:

Councillor Mac Cafferty stated that the Green Group were in favour of the recommendation and this was confirmed by the Green Group Members;

Councillor Platts stated that the Labour Group were in favour of the recommendation this was confirmed by the Labour Group Members;

Councillor Bell stated that the Conservative Group were against the recommendation and this was confirmed by the Conservative Group Members;

Councillor Brennan confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendation;

Councillor Fishleigh confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendation;

Councillor Janio confirmed that he wished to abstain from voting on the recommendation;

Councillor Knight confirmed that she was voting in favour of the recommendation.

43.21 The Mayor confirmed that the recommendation to note the petition and refer it to the Policy & Resources Committee had been carried.

43.22 **RESOLVED:** That the petition be noted and referred to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration.