

Subject: Petitions
Date of Meeting: 21 January 2021
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 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 where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter.

3. PETITIONS

- 3.1 **Addressing Children in Poverty in Brighton & Hove**
Lead Petitioner – Bruno DeOliveira

To receive the following petition signed by 34 people at the time of publication:

We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove Council to commit to an independent review of welfare reforms that the impact on families is not extensive than predicted.

To commit to an independent review of welfare reforms, to ensure the programme works as intending it to and that the impact on families is not extensive than predicted.

To commit to an independent review on provision for vulnerable groups needs to be made, to ensure that women fleeing domestic violence and families affected by mental health conditions, for example, are protected despite welfare reforms.

To develop a mechanism for collating and using foodbank statistics. These are available from all around the city and are rich and useful sources of data about the impact of reforms on the

ground. Developing a central mechanism for collecting and analysing these should help inform more useful policy.

Additional information:

More than 10,000 children in poverty in Brighton and Hove families were already on a precarious position before the coronavirus pandemic. Research combined recent figures from the Department for Work and Pensions with local housing costs to produce new estimates for low-income families – those earning less than 60% of the median income. The analysis shows 12,919 children living in low-income families in Brighton and Hove in 2018-19. This means 28.4% of all those aged 16 and under are living in poverty. These figures show unacceptably high levels of child poverty in our city. We must not normalise child poverty. Understand the impact of reforms on children where many other vulnerable groups are protected somewhat from the programmes of welfare reform, children remain vulnerable to its effects. Understanding the impacts of these reforms on children should help inform policies and encourage thinking about how to mitigate these effects.