COUNCIL	Agenda Item 52(g)
28 January 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP AMENDMENT

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY: CUTS TO JOBS AND SERVICES

To add a final paragraph as shown in bold italics:

The motion to read as follows:

"Nearly 50 years after it was established, the University of Sussex is a leading teaching and research institution. In the 2009 Times Higher Education University World Rankings, Sussex was ranked in the top five per cent of all universities worldwide.

University of Sussex staff and students play an integral role in Brighton and Hove, contributing to the city's economy, culture and vibrant atmosphere. The entire student community makes up roughly ten per cent of the population and brings in around £250 million to the regional economy annually.

This council notes:

The University of Sussex has revealed plans to cut spending by £5 million during the next academic year, achieved through job losses, course closures and department restructuring.

Proposed changes include:

- a reduction of 24 posts in Life sciences, 13 posts in Informatics, 5 posts in English, 3 in History, Art History and Philosophy and 62 posts in Professional support services including 5.5 Student Advice posts

- closing Unisex, a tripartite project involving the Universities of Sussex and Brighton and the local NHS Primary Care Trust, that provides support and advice for students concerning sexual health, HIV & Aids, Drugs and Alcohol.

- potentially closing the campus crèche and nursery, which is used by more than 80 staff and 20 students

This council believes:

- The proposed plans will have a negative impact on staff and students alike.

- In the longer term the cuts could reduce the critical role the university plays in supporting and helping to develop the city's economy and prosperity

- Reducing student support services is a particularly damaging option.

Therefore, this council

(1) Instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Sussex informing him of our concern and asking him and his colleagues to reconsider the proposals;

(2) In communicating these views, this council also calls on the University of Sussex to consider accepting the proposal made by the trade union UCU who adopted a resolution to present an alternative solution (with equivalent savings) to the University management. This proposes additional offers of part time working instead of redundancy, albeit to a greater number of people. It would have the distinct advantage of retaining the skills within the University, avoiding large numbers of redundancy payments, and putting the University in a position where it can grow faster in better economic times. It could also avoid industrial action which will impact negatively on teaching and research as well as the University's reputation."

Proposed by: Cllr Paul Elgood Seconded by: Cllr David Watkins